

Constructive Philosophy of India

VOLUME II (T A N T R A)



I dedicate this book to the loving memory of
my beloved wife, Śrīmatī Śībāni Kundu who by her
self-less devotion enabled me to become what I am.

Kuācārya Śrīmaṭ Vīrānanda Giri
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FOREWORD

It is with no small amount of trepidation that I venture to write this philosophy on 'Tantra'. I have tried to place on record, in a manner which will equally appeal to the philosopher, Savants, Scientists as well as to men of common sense, some of the most reccondite, long forgotten teachings and secret practices of sages of yore. In doing so, I have had the guidance of some of the original texts as well as that of my spiritual preceptor, Gurudeva, Srimat Kalikrishnananda Giri (deceased).

It is my duty here to express my heart felt blessings to two of my disciples Sri Hiralal Dawn and Sri D. P. Sen whose financial contribution has helped me very much.

I am grateful to Sri Himangshu Krishna Mitra, Managing Director of Messrs Fancy Printers Private Ltd., whose relentless effort made it possible for the speedy publication of this book.

Finally the author begs pardon for a few spelling and printing mistakes. A Corrigendum has been annexed at the end of this book for the reader's guidance.

Constructive Philosophy of India (Vol. II)

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS TANTRA

The term “Tantra” is derived from the root “Taṇ” suffix “Straṇ”. The root “Taṇ” means expansion or that which expands. Tantra, therefore, refers to those sacred scriptures which lead to the expansion of knowledge ‘Tannyate Vistāryate anena iti Tantra’. It has been stated in the Kāmikā Āgama, “as this sacred scripture deals with the thirty six fundamental principles and innumerable ‘mantras’, it leads to the expansion of knowledge and as this sacred scripture leads to the liberation of mankind from bondage to sufferings, it is called Tantra”. In Sanskrit the term, “Tantra” has a wider connotation. It indicates Śāstra, sacred scriptures in general. It also means any system of Philosophy, e. g. the Sāmkhya Philosophy is known as “Tantra”. Great ancient physicians have spoken of Aurveda as Tantra. Suśruta, the great Ācharya Śankara used the word ‘Vainaśika’ with reference to ‘Kshanavanga Tantra’. ‘Jaimini Tantra’ is the term by which the great Tantrik Sādhaka Vāskar Rai refers to Mīmāṃsa system. The “Kāmikā Āgama” says, ‘Tanati vipulam arthaṃ tattva mantra samhitām, trānanca kurute yasmāṅ tantram iti abhidhīyate’. In other words, this encyclopædic scripture is called Tantra, because it is the continuation, expansion

of the vast knowledge relating to Tattva or fundamental metaphysical principles, mantras, and because it leads to liberation. There are some who entertain the common misconception in holding the view that Tantra means the sacred scriptures of Śakti worshippers. This is not so. There are Tantras of Vaisṇavās, such as 'Sanat Kumara Tantra', 'Rādhā Tantra', the 'Pancharātra' etc. I think where there are Mantra, Yantra, Nyāsa, Mudrā, Bhutasuddhi, Kundalinī Yoga, worship of symbolic images, Guru and Dikshā or spiritual initiation, there is Tantra Śāstra. In fact, one of the names of 'Tantra Śāstra' is 'Mantra Śāstra'. The Tantras also deal with Science, Law, Medicine, variety of subjects e.g., Astro-nomy, Astrology, Chemistry and innumerable rules, prohibitions, injunctions etc. which have been governing Indian Society from its cradle down to this present age. In fact, the Tantras embody the whole of Indian Culture, Spiritualism. Philosophy, Art, Science, Medicine, Chemistry, Astrology, Astronomy, Politics, Moral Science, Sociology have been discussed profusely and with great insight in the Tantras. It is seer folly to think that this vast encyclopædic literature, cultural and spiritual heritage of mankind which exercised and are still exercising a great and profound influence upon what we call Indian is the petty śāstra of a particular sect or creed and is of recent origin. Want of proper appreciation, actual abuse of its injunctions, dread of spiritual practices, impact of western civilisation are responsible for the mass ignorance of the Tantric cult which, once illumined the whole of Indian intellectual and spiritual horizon. The real meaning of the term consists in denoting the vast number of sacred scriptures as well as practical Sādhana Śāstra or the science

and art of self-realisation. 'Tantra' comprises the specific and appropriate Sāstra and Sāadhanā of this iron age, Kaliyuga. It is an universally applicable Sāstra governing all men of this iron age namely Kaliyuga irrespective of caste, creed, sex, sect or nationality.

In the following chapters of this book, it has been pointed out that the Vedas and Tantras constitute two currents of 'Śrutis' or revealed truths i.e., truths revealed to and realised by the ancient Risis of yore who developed the faculty of super-sensuous perception by means of 'Yoga' and 'Tapaṣ'. The Vedas and the Tantras constitute the foundation of Indian culture and the history of Indian culture is as old as history itself. It may be pointed out here that some of the later Tantras are the products of philosophical thinking and exoteric practices of rites and rituals ; similarly some of the 'Āranyakas', 'Samhitās', 'Brāhmanas' can not claim the supreme authority of the earlier Vedas. India's culture and spiritualism is rooted in immemorial past and attained its present form through four distinctive erās known as Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, Kali Yugas. In the Satya, Tretā and Dvāpara erās the authority of the Vedas could not be challenged, but the Vedic rites and rituals, its philosophy and spiritualism no longer fit in with the religiosity and spiritualism of the modern man. It has been said 'Kalau Āgamaḥ Sammataḥ', i.e., the Āgama Śāstra or Tantra Śāstra is the appropriate sacred scripture of the Kali Yogā. The Āgama Śāstra may be considered under three periods viz., the most ancient stretching backward to pre-historic age, when two parallel kinds of cults viz., Vedic and Tantric cults were prevalent and the date

of which may be stated in between 4000 and 2000 B.C., the second period may be called medieval period of the creative synthesis during which the 'process of reciprocal 'taking from and adding to' between the two currents of 'Bhārata Dharma', viz., the Vedic cult and the Tantrik cult took place. This was the most fruitful period and may be stated in between 1200 and 200 B.C. Most of the important standard works in the 'Āgamas' and 'Nigamas' and rich commentaries by subsequent writers are the works of this period. The third period, the present age, may be characterised as commencing from 1200 B.C. pointing towards the dawn of a great synthesis which may be called 'the future destiny of man and religion of humanity.

It may not be out of place to mention that though we may notice differences in respect of rites and rituals, ceremonies, methods of worship and spiritual practice in the Tantras, there is a fundamental unity of thought in the conception of the ultimate Reality as Absolute Consciousness in inseparable union with power. The Tantras declare in unambiguous term that Śiva or the Saṭ aspect and power or Vimarsa of the Absolute are inseparably related. This non-dualistic approach has brought a revolutionary change in the conception of the Absolute Reality as a concrete dynamic spiritual principle comprehending in its own nature both change and changelessness. The synthetic outlook is evident in 'Śaiva and Śākta' Philosophy. In the 'Tantrāloka' a monumental work of Ācharya Abhinava Gupta, in the 'Prapanca-Sāra Tantra' of Acharya Śankara, it is said that 'Gourapāda' was the spiritual preceptor of 'Govinda Pādācarya'

whose disciple was Ācharya Avinava himself. Govinda Pāda wrote a famous commentary “Srividya Ratna Sūtra” on which the great Ācharya Śankara has commented. It is to be noted here that Ācārya Śankara’s ‘Ānandalahari’ and Lakshnadesika’s ‘Sārādatilaka’ with its commentary by Rāghava Bhatta constitute a masterpiece account of Śākta Philosophy. The most celebrated names after Rāghava Bhatta are Goraksanātha, Purnānanda, Sarvānanda, Natānānanda, Amritānanda and Bhaskar Rai. Purnānanda’s ‘Kāmakalāvīlāsa’ deals with Śakti as primordial power in its creative aspect. Amritānanda, his disciple has ‘Yogini-Hridaya Dipikā’ a commentary on ‘Nityā Sodosikārnava’. It is one of the outstanding non-dualistic approach of Tāntric Sādhana. Bhaskar Rai, a great scholar and Sādhaka of Śākta school of thought wrote a famous commentary viz. ‘Setu Bandha’, a very important work. It has already been pointed out that Bhārat Dharma or the religion or Bhārat-Varsha in its essence is revelation. Revealed truths have been classified under two heads :—

(a) Vaidik Śruti and (b) Tāntrika Śruti.

Both being Śruti or revealed truths can not be contradictory to each other. ‘Dividhā Kiritāh Śruti Vaidikī Tantriki Caiva’ (Maharshi Hārīta). The precondition of all revelation is the opening up of the third-eye, ‘Divya Cakshu’, i.e., the faculty of super-sensuous perception. What is revealed to this faculty is eternal truth characterised by immediacy, certainty and intense clarity. Revealed truths can not be self-contradictory, vague and indistinct. There are scholars who hold

the view that the Vedas and the Tantras are opposed Śāstras. Such a view is due to misconception and ambiguity involved in the use of the term, 'Tantra'. Tantra does not mean, however, the petty scripture of a particular sect or creed. In order to avoid such ambiguity, it is better to use the word, Āgama indicating the four Vedas, and Nigamas indicating the innumerable Tantras. In the Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara ages the authority and authenticity of the Vedas could not be challenged, though Vaidikī forms of worship, rites and rituals had undergone many changes in the Tretā and Dvāpara erās. The exoteric aspect of Bhārat Dharma expressed in the performance of rites and rituals and methods of worship have ever been changing adapting itself to the changing circumstances and environment and to the intellectual, emotional, and volitional responses of the people. But the inner truth, the cardinal principle has ever remained unchanged. The Tantras are continuation of the Vedic lore in the sense that the truths of the Vedas and their spiritualism viz., the oneness of the ultimate Reality is their common goal or ideal, which both the scriptures want to preach, though the tāntrik forms of worship, rites, rituals and methods of realising the ultimate truth are distinct. This is so, because the rigid asceticism of the upanishadic period and austerity involved in the performance of penances, sacrifices, rites and rituals, the various Vedic injunctions and prohibitions could not suit the changed circumstances and inspire the present age and its people. So the proper and appropriate Śāstra of the Kali Yuga is Tantra, when men are weltering in the whirlpool of life and its sufferings, engrossed in the enjoyment of mundane values completely oblivious of his intrinsic divine nature. The

Rishis of old, therefore, had the foresight, farsight and insight to make provision for the fifth Veda, which is 'Nigama' or Tantra and its allied Śāstras. Hence we find there are vedic and Tantrik Kalpa Śāstras and Suktas such as Tantrika Gods and Goddesses and Matsya-Suktas, a counter-part of Brahma Sutra. We have Śakti-sūtras of Agastya. There are both Vaidik sanskāras or moral and spiritual purifications and Tantrik Sanskāras, such as Aviseka, Vaidiki and Tantrik initiations which are respectively called 'Upanayana' and "Dikshā", Vaidik and Tantrik Gayatrī, the Vaidik 'Aum' and the Tantrik Gāyatrī, 'Hring', Vaidika Acharya and Tantrik Guru. Evidently there are distinctions but not absolute separation and opposition. It is said in the famous Tantra 'Kulārṇava' that without the pranava, 'Aum', no body can realise the truth of the mantra with which he has been spiritually initiated or Dikshita. On the other hand, it has been enjoined in the Vedas, without the awakening of the Kundalinī Śakti, the Pranava 'Aum' which is the macro-cosmic Sound or Nāda can not be realised. The awakening of the Kundalinī Śakti, is an art or practical sādhanā which the Tantrās have elaborately developed., The pranava 'Aum' was revealed to the super-sensuous perception of the Rishis or the spiritual visionaries, and the Rishis are so called, because they are the seers of Mantras 'Rishayaḥ Mantra Drastāraḥ.' It will not be out of place here to raise the question, what was the nature of Sādhanā or spiritual art of visualising the truth of the 'pranava'. Such Sādhanā is to be found in the Tantra śāstras, hence they are called sādhan śāstra. Further, Mantra dīkṣā or spiritual initiation by mantra has been prevalent in Bhārat-Varsha from times immemorial.

Indian people as a whole comprises within its fold the Śāktas or Śakti - worshippers or primordial self-conscious, self-luminous-power. The Śaivas worship Śiva who is Consciousness wedded to power, the Vaishnavas worship 'Vishnu' ever in inseperable union with his consort, 'Mahālakṣmī', as well as the Vedāntins. All these religious sects are spiritually initiated by distinct mantras which are the exclusive property of Tantra. Mantra-Dikshā or spiritual initiation with distinct 'Mantras' is as old as Indian Religion itself. Further, Śaktiworship or worship of the primordial self-luminous power which is Tantrik worship per excellence, is to be found in Rik̐ Veda in its 'Rātri-śūkta or ode to the ultimate Reality. In the Taittiriya Upanishad, 'the Goddess Ambikā' is said to be the sister of 'Rudra'. In the conception of 'Aditi', we have a self-conscious, self-luminous Mother-goddess of creation, preservation and destruction. The Sābitrī Gāytrī is there to indicate that the universal Mother is not only self-luminous but also self-conscious ultimate Reality. All these really indicate not only the supreme authority of the Vedas and the Tantras but also the supplementation of the former by the latter for the enhancement, enrichment of Bhārata Dharma which implies the eternally onward march of all that is persistent and counts in the economy of life. The Tantras, therefore, are neither alien to the Vedas nor opposed to them. They indicate the eternal śāstras or revelation in the evolutionary progress of the religiosity of mankind, the ceaseless aspiration of human nature for its fulfilment in realising the same self, here, there and everywhere. The Vedas and the Tantras may be said to be just like two wings of one and the same bird,

with one wing a bird can not fly. The two wings must inseparably and in co-operation with each other work together in order that the zenith of its flight may be reached. Hence it has been enjoined in the Tantra Śāstra that 'Brahma-Vidyā' or self-realisation is to be attained by living progressively through seven distinct acāras known as 'Saptācāra' or 'Sapta-Jñāna-Bhumikā'. The Sumum Bonum of life can not be achieved all at once, perfection is progressive realisation, it is not finished and finite something. It represents the dynamic spiritual onward movement of the intrinsic divinity in humanity, 'Pratya-Vijñā' or realisation of the self as self-conscious, self-luminous, All-consciousness which is the goal.

The Tantras have classified mankind according to their natural aptitudes and dispositions. (1) Pravrittiḥ or Bhāva has very important place in Śādhana or spiritual practice, 'Prāvrittiresā Bhutānāṃ Nivrittiḥ tu mahāphalāḥ' i. e., Tantra declares that our present tendencies, dispositions and reactions to specific situations, environment and circumstances are the products of our past deeds in previous births and rebirths. Our present pravrittiḥ or saṃskāras or dispositions are not accidental events but they are the cumulative effects of the evolutionary current through which men have to pass in order that their present dispositions, instinctive tendencies may progressively be purified enabling them to attain the supreme ideal viz. divinity, immortality, and freedom. So in the Tantra 'Bhāva-Suddhi' or 'Citta-Suddhi', purification of the mind has a very important place. Purification of the body, of the mind, of the intellect, of our emotional and volitional nature is the essential, indispensable condition of spiritual

progress and such purification is to be attained by the specific Sāadhanā known in Tantra, 'Bhuta Suddhi'. There is an English maxim, "Sow an act, by repetition, you form a habit and when habit grows into second nature, you reap a destiny". This is 'Pravrittih' or our present destiny. If we are bound to our present destiny by the fruits of our act-forces, good or bad in previous births, re-births and present living, the same act-forces may be counter-acted and dismissed by the release of benevolent thought-power, will-power and act-power. This means reincarnation by means of transvaluation of values, a transfiguration of the human into the divine, birth of the new man out of the ashes of the old, the emergence of the spirit out of the material plane, the vital plane, the mental plane. We must transcend the cravings of the flesh, the material plane i.e., 'Pravritti-mārga', in order to reap the richest harvest of life which is 'Nivritti-mārga'. We must avoid the path of 'Preya' i.e., cravings for mundane, values, for mundane pleasures which bind us to sufferings of life and follow the path of 'Śreyah' the path of liberation from bondage to sufferings. Thus the Tantra has classified mankind under three broad heads according to the 'Pravritti of the individuals viz., (1) the Paśu or man with animal dispositions and propensities and the outward expression of this disposition in overt action is known as, 'Pasyā-cāra'. (2) The man with Vira or heroic disposition struggling forward for emancipation and his acting out such disposition in practical life is known, as 'Virā-cāra', (3) The man with "Divya-Bhāva" or divine disposition transcends the cravings of the flesh, the restless, passionate turmoils of life-impulse. The deeds which such a man performs is

replete with divine grace, this is “Divyā-cāra”. Thus we see that closely associated with the ‘Bhāvas’, the Tantras have enjoined seven acāras given in the “Kularnava” Tantra, as follows :— (a) ‘Vedā-Cāra’. (b) ‘Vaisnavā-Cāra’. (c) ‘Śaivā-Cāra’. (d) ‘Dakshinā-Cāra’. (e) ‘Virā-Cāra’. (f) ‘Siddhānta-Cāra’. (g) ‘Kaulā-Cāra’. The aspirant must rise step by step through their different ‘acāras’ or stages of self-realisation till he reaches the seventh or the highest stage of ‘Life Divine’. The first stage consists in achieving purification of the body and the mind ; for body and mind are the vehicles of expression of the self or divinity in man. The second stage consists in the cultivation of devotion to God. A relation between God and man is established. This assumes dualism. The third stage of spiritual knowledge of the identity of the self with the ultimate Reality, Śiva is ‘Śaivā-Cāra’. The Dakshinā-Cāra which is the fourth stage consists in the consolidation of the gains acquired so far in the three preceeding stages. The fifth stage is known as ‘Vāmā-Cāra’ which consists in comparative estimation of all the values so far gained and self-surrender to the primordial power or Supreme Śakti, ‘Ādyā-Śakti’ permeating the universe, the indwelling informing spirit of all. The sixth stage of spiritual illumination which the spiritual pilgrim or aspirant comprehending the relative merits and demerits of the paths of enjoyment and liberation, attains is definite, intensely clear, immediate knowledge of the self. By unflinchingly pursuing this path, he reaches the seventh or the final stage known as, ‘Kaulā-Cāra’. The term ‘Kula’ means ‘Brahma’ and not family tradition, caste or creed. The Tantra says, ‘Kulang Brahmah Sanātanah’.

He realises the same, self here, there and everywhere, 'Sarvaṃ Śarvātmakam'. The predominant 'bhāva' of a Kaula has been very aptly described in the Tantra as follows :-

'Divya Bhāva Rataḥ Kulāḥ Sarvatra Sama Darśinaḥ'. In other words Kaula is one who is deeply immersed in Divya-Bhāva or the state of 'All-consciousness'. The Viśva-Sāra Tantra says, 'he truly is liberated in this life who knows and acts out the 'Seven ācāras' comprised within the three Vedas'. It is, therefore, conspicuously evident that in the Tantrik Sādhana, 'Bhāva' and 'Ācāra' have very important place. Without transfiguration and transvaluation of 'Pravritti' i. e., inherent mental dispositions and tendencies, there can be no liberation and without translating the 'Bhāvas' in actual practice or Sādhana which means acting out of the Bhāvas in practical life, there can be no self-realisation. Hence, in this sense, the Tantras are practical 'Sāadhan-Śāstrās' of the Kaliyuga where three classes of men are to be found and seven kinds of ācaras are prevalent according to their 'Bhāvas' or mental dispositions and tendencies.

In Tantra Sādhana, 'Bhāva' or inherent tendencies and dispositions have a very important place. In the 'Kaulāvali Tantrā', it has been said, 'You may undergo physical and mental austerities, you may meditate, you may carry on Mantra-Japa for a long time, but without sublimation and purification of the mind and the development of pure and beneficial dispositions, the desired end can not be attained, "Na Bhāvena Vinā caiva Yantra mantraḥ phala pradāḥ, Bhavena lavate mukting Bhavena Kulabardhanam". Pure Bhāva leads to

liberation 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven', when the inward nature is purified, there is the emergence of right knowledge which leads to liberation. In other words, Bhāva or our intellectual, emotional and volitional dispositions constitute the motive force towards right action. Indeed the essence of true piety consists in its mystic inwardness. Quantity of knowledge can not ascertain the quality of true piety. True religion consists in the reconstruction of personality and transvaluation of life's values. It may be said that 'Bhāva' comprises whole man's reaction, intellectual, emotional and volitional response to ultimate Reality. Bhāva-Sādhana thus means transfiguration of what is human into the divine. As the Tantra says 'Bhāvena lavate sarvaṃ bhavane devadarśanam bhavena Paramaṃ Jñānaṃ tasmāt bhāvabālambanam' i. e., Bhāva leads to highest realisation, supreme knowledge and therefore purification of our dispositions is the supreme way. It has already been pointed out that 'Bhāvas' in Tantra have been classified under three heads according to the characteristic mental dispositions of the individuals viz :- (1) 'Paśu Bhāva.' (2) 'Bira-Bhāva'. (3) 'Divya Bhāva'. The Tantras do not decry or despise Paśu-Bhāva. The three kinds of Bhāvas indicate three different stages of progressive realisation. As a man goes from boyhood to youth and from youth to full-fledged maturity ; similarly mankind, in order to achieve spiritual perfection must pass through the different Bhāvas. Ordinary human beings are bound by various kinds of limitations, such as hatred, shame, fear, greed, pride of caste, creed, infatuation for worldly values. The spiritual aspirant has to free himself from those shackles gradually in order that he may attain

‘Śiva-Pada’. Human beings who are endowed with **‘Paśu-Bhāva’** are of two distinct categories according to the **“Kaula-Mārga Rahasya”**. Those individuals who are deeply engrossed in mundane values, and hanker after physical and mental happiness incessantly and believe in the doctrine, **“Eat, drink and be merry”**, are called the degraded **‘Paśu’**. Those human beings who are confined within the prison-house of the narrow family life and yet try to come out of their illusion and ignorance by the performance of Vedic rites and rituals imbibe a natural inclination for sublime thoughts, for progress and believe that man does not live by bread alone, are called **‘Bivāva Paśu’**. The Tantras with keen insight have laid down certain rules and prohibitions for those human beings longing for perfection i.e., for those religious and spiritual aspirants called **paśus** comparatively placed in the lowest scale in the hierarchy of progressive self-realisation. In the **‘Kulārṇava’**, a famous Tantra, the rules and prohibitions for the **Paśu Bhāva Sadhana** are as follows :- **“He should not eat fish or flesh, look upon woman as means for satisfying cravings of the flesh, he should refrain from lust for others’ wealth, must observe silence, must not eat at night, carry out the commands of the Guru, perform Vedic rites and rituals, practise three sandhyās regularly and meditate upon mantras. By following the Paśyā Cāra, he will gradually be morally and spiritually elevated. He will realise that these injunctions conduce to his salvation, moral and spiritual perfection. Thus he is promoted to the rank of Vira-Bhāva. It is evident that Paśu-Bhāva is the primary stage and ‘Pasyācara’ consists in primary rules and prohibitions for ordinary human beings who have moral, religious and spritual aspirations, “who look**

before and after and pine for what is not." Paśyā-cāra is thus not be decried. It has an honoured place in the evolutionary march for spiritual unfoldment. We are by nature, and natural dispositions, oblivious of our true nature, and Paśyā-Cāra is just the stepping stone towards the dawn of self-awakening. It is the first state of the awakening of the sleeping, slumbering soul out of the dark caverns of memory to the daylight of consciousness. It constitutes the boyhood of self-development towards juvenation. Youth is the age of heroism, of adventure, of risk-taking, of fighting forward. It represents the onward, upward rush of life-impulse for progress, the restless, passionate striving for freedom, immortality and divinity, our true heritage. This is what, in Tantra, is called Vira-Bhāba. The heroic soul with Vira-Bhāva has been described in the Tantras beautifully as follows :- "Those who are not carried away by every wind of emotions and fashionable doctrines, those who have complete self-control, those who are standing on the bank of immortality and have just a foretaste of intrinsic divinity, those whose hearts long for freedom from bondage to sufferings, those who are not afraid of anybody, of anything of the world, are called heroic souls. A Vira-Sādhaka has been described in 'Kāmākshya Tantra' as fearless, well-wisher of all animate and inanimate beings, devoted to his Guru, whose magnetic presence inspires every body around him, generous, truthful, self-sacrificing, offer self-less services to all, well-versed in the Vedas and Tantras, devoid of any bias, self-contented and bereft of all sorts of egotism. The 'Yogini Hridaya' Tantra says without Vira-Sādhana, salvation can not be quickened. The heroic soul must perform his rites and rituals

with his married wife in a secluded place for a long time, strictly according to the teachings and directions of his spiritual preceptor or Guru. In the 'Prantosini', the glory of Vira-Sadhaka has been stated as follows :- 'Where the heroic soul dwells, there all holy places assemble together. He is a divine being in human form. There mortality, death, famine, illusions can never exist. It is appropriate for the heroic soul following strenuously the Virā-Cāra, according to the directions of Guru to be promoted to the highest stage, viz., 'Dibyabhumi'. Without the Vira-Bhāba, no body can attain the highest level, the Divya-Bhāva. Virā-Cāra, is therefore, the gateway to self-realisation. The heroic soul dispels all kinds of dualism and duality and attains the state of non-dualism. In the 'Kaulāvali Nirṇaya', very little distinction has been made between a Virā-Cari and Divyā-Cari, as follows :-

'Divyasca Devavaṇ Prāyo Vīrasca Uddhata Māna-saḥ', i. e., spiritual aspirant who has attained Divyhood is mild and simple as a child, modest in all his activities, sweet in his words, has a resplendant body and mind, realises the same self here, there and every where ; but the spiritual aspirant who has attained Vira-hood appears to be a person of persons, as the sun is distinguished from all other luminaries, yet respector or all persons. The Vira-Sādhaka and Kula-Sādhaka in Tantra practically means the same thing and implies the same ācāra. To him the entire universe is an integral experience in which all kinds of differences, distinctions, antinomies are reconciled and harmonised. He discovers, with the awakening of the faculty of supersensuous perception, the 'Oneness' of all, the same self here, there and everywhere.

In other words, he perceives with the third eye, the 'Divya-chakshu', the indwelling, informing spirit of all.

"Divyabhāva Rataḥ Kaulāh Sarbatra Sama Darśinah", the word 'Sama' here means the intrinsic, inexhaustible "Divine Grace" and love sanctifying and permeating all. He is saturated, illumined and sanctified with Divine compassion. He can transmute the normal human consciousness and energy into the transcendental wisdom and great vitality. During the moment of disillusionment he perceives in his original nature a limitless compassion and realises that the greater the illumination, the greater is the compassion, the deeper is his wisdom. Thus in the Tantras, we find an intrinsic relation between 'bhāva' or mental dispositions and tendencies and the 'ācaras', the outward expression of these tendencies in overt actions: Those dispositions constitute the latent conative forces which tend towards outward expression. We act out our thoughts and feelings. The intellectual, emotional, volitional contents of our nature are inseparable and constitute one whole. So 'Bhāva' and 'ācāra' are just like inward and outward expressions of one whole which is the person. When the person is a creature of circumstances, of changing ideas, passions and emotions, yet has a feeling of breaking through the bondage, he is a 'Paśu'. When by heroism and courage, he controls his passionate impulses, he becomes master of circumstances, he is a 'Vira' or the heroic soul. When he surrenders all his passions, thoughts, feelings and actions along with the fruits thereof to the service of the self, he attains the state of supreme wisdom, supreme illumination, supreme compassion. For he perceives through the faculty of supersensuous

perception, the 'Oneness' of all, he attains the final stage which is 'Divya-Bhāva' and all his actions are saturated with divine grace. He is freed from all shackles of bondage. He realises divinity in humanity, immortality in mortality, freedom in bondage ; enjoyment and liberation, 'Bhukti' and 'Mukti', 'Samsāra' and 'Nirvāna', mean the same to him. All this is Tantra which declares in unambiguous voice for the salvation of suffering humanity, that purification of our intellectual life, emotional and volitional life, which go to form our 'Bhāva' or dispositions is the indispensable condition and stepping stone to further progress in the path of self-realisation. A good and benevolent thought-force generates a good and benevolent conative force, gradually it gathers strength as it is entertained for a long time. It acquires a tendency towards outward overt actions. So the Tantras declare with much psychological insight that right and good feelings lead to right and good conduct. So without 'Bhāva-Sādhana' or will to develop benevolent ideas and feelings, there can not be Virā-Cāra and Divyā-Cāra Sādhana. The three 'Bhāvas', therefore, naturally correspond to three kinds of ācāras or right actions. But 'ācāra' presupposes the existence of objective circumstances and environment which react upon and influence our conduct. We do not act in vacuum, every action has a reaction from objective circumstance and environment. There are two ways of self-realisation : (i) One of the ways is by negation of the objective world till negation is no longer possible. The self is an absolute 'Identity' which must be realised by negating all differences. This is the well known 'Neti, Neti' method propounded by Ācārya Śankara in his Advaitya philosophy, according

to which, every kind of duality must be rigorously eliminated. The world is there to put obstacles against the onward march of the soul. It has nothing in it which may help the individual to attain spiritual elevation. The world, is the "vale of sorrow", it is full of misery, it is arch-enemy against spiritual aspirants. All our psychical faculties, all our physical powers have to be brought into requisition to fight out the world both subjective and objective in order to attain liberation from bondage to the enemy. By 'Viveka-Jñānam' or discriminative knowledge, the world must be negated and by complete renunciation of every thing highest knowledge can only be attained. Such a system of nondualism based on negation, renunciation has failed to inspire human beings of Kaliyuga, the "Iron Age", deeply engrossed in an objective world of mundane values and aspirations. Even in the Satya Yuga there were very few persons who were called "Risis" on account of their attainments of the highest spiritual revelation and illumination by means of absolute renunciation and denunciation of the "vale of tears", i. e., the real objective world. Tantras have prescribed a very different method of self-realisation. This method was preached by the Supreme Lord of the universe Mahādeva himself who revealed the Tantrik way to certain Risis of old. Absolute and complete denunciation i. e., negation of the world of the objective facts and values is neither practicable nor feasible. The world is the play ground of "Ānandamoyee", or all blissful-Conscious-Power. The world is the "vale of soul making" and neither an illusory experience nor a non-reality. The Tantras are practical Sādhana Śāstras i.e., the Practical Science and Art of self-realisation.

They are varied in their applicability due to different human competencies and constitutions which constitute their Bhāvas or 'Springs of Action'. The spiritual aspirant must traverse through various stages, they have to find out in the process of their spiritual evolution their own suitable path or line of action which are called 'Ācāras', or the ways of behaviour and specific response to ultimate Reality. These ways or paths naturally and generally are seen to be divergent from one another at first, but ultimately they converge and are, in the long run, coalesce and are transmuted, as closer and closer approach is made to the final goal which is the same for all. Methods are different but the end is the same for all eternity. It has been nicely said 'as different rivers ultimately converge into the sea appearing divergent at first sight'. The Tantrik Sādhaka by method of worship prescribed in the Śāstra is inspired from the very outset to feel and to realise the ultimate Reality or the supreme self as the all-blissful-conscious-Power, as the indwelling, informing spiritual principle in all and to regard this "Magnum Materium" as the Mother herself, the universal Mother in nature. On the first flutter of life-impulse, the 'Élan Vital', it is the Mother in all our living and conscious activities who is realising her intrinsic supreme self or 'Para-Brahma' in and through the microcosm and the macrocosm. This is called divine play, 'Līlā'. Every object of nature, animate or inanimate is to the Tantrik Sādhaka, saturated and permeated with all blissful-conscious-Power and therefore veritable object of obescience and worship. Man's thought-force, conative-force or act-forces are made to flow towards all-loving, all-comprehending, all-embracing, all-blissful

conscious-Power. All animate and inanimate world of objects are thus transfigured in that blissful state of supreme ecstasy which is the ens perfectimum of all Sādhana or spiritualism. Man and woman, for example, may thus be transfigured, sublimated, introverted into one absolute Cosmic Principle, 'Śiva-Śakti Sāmarasya' in perfect indivisible union. Thus every man and woman, nay, all living beings glow with divinity. This state is the fulfilment, harmonisation, of our animal propensities, of rational, moral impulses and spiritual aspirations. This tantrik way not only inspires us with fresh hope, energy, vitality and intellectual comprehension in the pursuit of the supreme path but also ultimately enables us to attain liberation by living through the life of enjoyment and contemplation, 'Bhukti' and 'Mukti'. Tantra does not decry wealth, power and sex necessary for human existence, These values are to be sublimated, transfigured, introverted to the service of the self, for the self's liberation from bondage. The Tantrik has every faith in the reality of the world, to him, it is not an illusion nor an evil, it is not the "hell of sorrow" but the "vale of soul-making". This transfiguration, dynamisation and sublimation of physical, vital and mental apparatus can never be achieved by philosophical and metaphysical speculation but only by means of the practical method of "Kundalinī Yoga", which in spite of diversity of rites and rituals, methods of worship, enjoined in the multifarious Tantras, is the cardinal essence, the quintessence of the Āgamic scriptures. This is Tantrik-Ācara per excellence and universally accepted and maintained by Śāktas, Sāivas, and Vaisnavas which collectively constitute the cult which they teach, preach, demonstrate in actual life

and is collectively known as 'Bhārat-Dharma' destined to be the 'Religion of Humanity'.

The Tantra is non-sectarian, it provides methods of self-realisation. It throws open gates of heaven to all men and women irrespective of caste, creed or sex. Man must not live with the superficial aspects of inward and outward nature. He must penetrate deeper into the abysmal depth of the ultimate nature, 'Ādyā-Prakiti', to discover or rather uncover his true nature by diving beyond the limiting forces of space, time, causality, attachment and desire without which liberation would be meaningless, attainment would be negative and realisation nothing but nothingness, a vacuum. Fighting forward is not fighting in vacuum, it has meaning only with reference to the 'battle of life', the objective world of real 'Tattvas', in order that man may regain his paradise, coming out of mother's womb, as soon as we come in contact with objective nature, we fall into the sleep of self-obliviousness. This state is called the state of bondage, of dualism. In this state, the self appears as an individual bifurcated from the universe. But such a state is only a temporary phase ; if there is sleep, it is the potentiality of dynamic self-awakening. The aim and ideal of the great Tantrik Sādhana is self-realisation. This method of self-discovery enjoined in the Tantra, the 'Kundalinī Yoga' leads the spiritual aspirant, stage by stage to the progressive acquaintance with the most valuable treasure's of nature's flower garden, of the fundamental principles or 'tattvas,' super-sensual beings or powers both benevolent and evil and teaches him how to utilise the benevolent forces and sublimise lower evilforces

and animal propensities. He realises that the good, benevolent spirits help him in the onward, upward march of the soul, if he but truly knows them and also knows how to utilise their assistance in the way of self-realisation. This is Tantra per excellence. There are evil Tantras and 'Tāntrikas' who seek the help of spirits in obtaining mundane values and unlawfully, immorally utilise evil powers for selfish aggrandisement. This is black magic in all forms of religion which leads to degeneration in place of regeneration, hell instead of heaven. True Tantra leads one into the inner temple of nature both inward and outward revealing to him, her wonderful secrets including the treasure-house of 'Cakras', the various conscious-centres and sources of power within man. Thus the Tantras give an insight into the human mechanism. It is his chemistry, his first discovered use of Mercury, poison of snakes and metals as medicines. His Yoga-Śāstra, the scriptures which teaches psychophysical culture leading to the evolution of certain physical, psychical force about which ordinary men are ignorant. It enables us to control astronomical and astrological forces and to mould them to the service of the self. All this is to be attained by 'sādhanā' and not by verbal jugglery.

CHAPTER—II

Classification of Tantras as Revealed Scriptures.

The Tantras have been classified in various ways. It has already been said that the Tantras constitute that great spiritual 'Encyclopaedia' of Indian culture comprising within its fold all kinds of spiritual practices, Yoga in all its varieties. It combines, the systematised rituals or Karma with an inner purifying and elevating process of Yoga. They have always worked as integrating, expanding forces binding the various sects under its fold, co-ordinating Karma, Jñāna, Bhakti and Yoga. The literal meaning of the term 'Tantra' which means expansion of knowledge and emancipation from bondage to sufferings signifies the true import and connotation of the term.

Tantras have been primarily classified under three heads :— (1) Āgamah, (2) Yāmala and (3) Dāmara. Of course, the word 'Āgamah' and Tantra are often used as synonymous terms. There is also no distinction in respect of their essential teachings. The Āgamahs or the Tantras have been divided into Sat-Āgamah or orthodox and Asat-Āgamah or Heterodox. Those Āgamahs which do not accept the authority of the Vedas and proclaim their independence against Vedic lore have been usually called 'Asat-Agamah'; while Āgamahs which accept the authority and authenticity of the Vedas,

regard them as continuation of the Vedic lore, yet maintaining their distinctive character and values in the elaboration of the yogic processes and worship both esoteric and exoteric. The Tantra declares that all these presuppose a state of purification of our intellectual, emotional and volitional life leading to right thinking, right feeling and right action. The Yāmalaś are eight in number viz., Rudra Yāmala, Skanda-Yāmala, Brahma-Yāmala, Bishnu-Yāmala, Kuvera Yāmala and Indra-Yāmala. A rare manuscript of Brahma-Yāmala is to be found in the Darbar Library of Nepal. It has been pointed out there, that the 8 Yāmalaś constitute eight kinds of revealed truths or Śruti-Vākyas to eight prophets or Risis known in the Tantras as Bhairavas or incarnations of Śiva. These eight prophets are, Sacchanda, Krodha, Unmatta, Ugra, Kapali, Jhankara, Sekhara and Vijaya respectively.

There are 6 kinds of Dāmaras viz., Yoga-Dāmara, Śiva-Dāmara, Durgā-Dāmara, Saraswati-Dāmara, Brahma-Dāmara and Gandharva-Dāmara.

The Tantras have been classified, according to 'Āmnāya', under five heads. The word 'Āmnāy' means revelation or Śruti. The revelations are divine commandments or commandments of Śiva which were communicated to five Risis of old viz., Sadya-Yāta, Vāma-deva, Aghora, Tatpurusa, Īśāna. Sadya-Yāta Risi preached the five Kamika Agamas or Samhita. The Risi Vāma-deva established the Samhitās known as Dipta-Samhitā. The Risi Aghora brought into existence five Samhitās known as Vijaya. The Rishi Tatpurusa preached

Raurava Samhitās and Risi Isāna was the founder of eight Sāmhitas.

There is another classification of Tantras according to geographied positions in which they prevailed. They are Kerala, Kashmir, Gāndharva and Vilāsa. According to 'Sammohana Tantra' the Kerala Tantra was prevalent in the province of Congo, Malaya, from Madras up to Nepal the Kashmir Tantras or Agamas prevailed, from Sylhet upto Bay of Bengal was the land of Gāndharva Tantra. The Vilāsa Tantra could be found everywhere.

The Tantras have also been classified geographically under the following heads according to, 'Śakti-Mangala Tantra' the provinces from Vindhya hills upto Chittagong including the undivided Bengal was known as 'Bishnu-Krānta'. Sixty Four Tantras were the Sacred scriptures of this vast tract of land. Extending from the Vindhya hills upto Nepal and Tibet was the land of Ratha Krānta and the predominant Tantras of this territory was known as 'Ratha-Krānta' Tantra. The land extending from the Vindhya Hills downwards to the Indian Ocean was known 'Aswa-Krānta' and the ruling sacred scriptures was collectively called 'Aswa-Kranta' Tantra. Each Kranta comprises within its fold sixty-four Tantras and therefore it has been concluded that $64 \times 3 = 192$ Tantras were the dominant sacred scriptures of 'Bhāratavarsa'.

From 1200 B. C. down to the present day innumerable Tantras have been written by great Scholars, prophets and Sādhakas. It should be specially pointed

out here that all of them can not claim to have the status of Śruti or revealed truths. We must, therefore, be very cautious in eliminating what “Asat-Āgamas” or evil Tantras are which contradict the Śrutis or revealed truths, the spiritual legacy left behind by the Rishis of yore which lead to the expansion of knowledge and liberation from bondage to suffering by the practice of Kundalinī Yoga, the quintessence of all that is called Tantras.

A careful study of the Tantrik scriptures will show that there are ten Śiva Āgamas and eighteen Rudra Āgamas ; so the total number of āgamas are twenty-eight. It has been mentioned in one of the ancient scriptures, ‘Kirānā-gama’ that after the annihilation of the universe, the supreme Lord, ‘Parameswara’ revealed Agamik Śrutis to ten prophets celebrated as ten Śivas, as follows :-

(1) The name of the first incarnation of Śiva is Pranava-Śiva, and the Āgama which was revealed to him was called “Kāmika”.

(2) The Second incarnation of Śiva is ‘Suddha’ and the Āgama revealed to him is known as ‘Yogaja’.

(3) The third incarnation of Śiva is known Dipta and to him was revealed the third Āgama known as ‘Cintā’.

(4) The fourth incarnation is known as ‘Kārana’ who received the 4th. revelation which is the ‘Kārana Agamah’.

(5) The fifth incarnation is Suskha and the 5th. revelation is known as ‘Ajita’.

(6) The sixth Āgama was revealed to Īsa and he received the 6th. revelation as 'Sudiptaka'.

(7) The seventh Āgama was received by the 7th. incarnation known as Suksha and the seventh revelation was known as 'Sukṣha'.

(8) The eight Revelation known as 'Sahasva' was received by the 8th. 'Siva-Kala'.

(9) The ninth Revelation known as 'Supraveda' was received by 'Dhānesha'.

(10) The tenth Revelation known as "Angsuman" was received by the 10th. Siva 'Angsu'.

There are eighteen Rudra Āgamas known as (1) Vijya, (2) Nihsasva, (3) Parameswara, (4) prativa, (5) Mukhabimba, (6) Siddha, (7) Santana, (8) Nar-Sinha, (9) Candrahāsa, (10) Virābhadrā, (11) Svambhaba, (12) Udrakta, (13) Kaurava, (14) Makuta, (15) Kirana, (16) Galita, (17) Ajuya and (18) is unknown.

We come across a manuscript in Gupta Script belonging to 1800 A. D. in the Nepal Darbar Library bearing the name "Niḥsvaśa Samhita". It has five divisions known as (1) 'Loukika-Dharma' which is almost extinct. (2) Mulasutra, (3) Uttara Sutra, (4) Naya Sutra and (5) Grahya Sutra. All these Āgamas either preached dualism or panentheism or 'Dvaita-dvaita'. All these scriptures have undergone various transformations in time. In the 'Kāmika Āgama', it is mentioned that five current of Srutis or revelations issued forth from the five faces representing five incarnations of 'Sadā-Śiva'

who are known as :—(1) Sadyoyāta, (2) Vāma Deva, (3) Aghora, (4) Tatpurusa, (5) Īsāna. To the first was revealed five kinds of Loukika Tantra, to the second was revealed five kinds of Vaidiki Tantra, to the third was revealed five kinds of “Adhyatmika Tantra”, to the fourth was revealed five kinds of ‘Atimarga Tantra’ and to the fifth, five kinds of ‘Mantrā Tantra’.

Besides these we have sixty-four Vairava Āgamas as well as sixty-four Kula Tantras which are conducive to the attainment of the supreme realisation. The names of all these Tantras are mentioned in ‘Nitya-Sodasi-Kārṇava, (Published from Ānanda Ashram). Elaborate explanation of their names are to be found in Bhaskara Rai’s ‘Setu-Bandha’, a very important treatise on Tantrik Cult. All these Tantras have been considered by Laksmidhara, the celebrated commentator as non-Vaidika. There are Vaidika Āgamas, orthodox Tantras also which preach non-dualism. These are collectively known as ‘Samaya-Āgamas’ or ‘Samayā-Cāra Tantras’. There are four important Āgamas which are celebrated as (1) ‘Vasista Samhitā’ (2) ‘Sanaka Samhita’, (3) ‘Suka Samhita’, (4) ‘Sanandana Samhita’ and (5) ‘Sanat Kumar Samhita’ according to the respective names of their authors viz., Vasista, Sanka, Suka, Sanandana and Sanat Kumara.

In ‘Todrāla Tantra’, we come across the names of 64 Tantras. The names of some of the important Tantras given below :-

(1) Kali Tantra, (2) Mundamālā Tantra, (3) Tārā Tantra, (4) Nirvana Tantra, (5) Vira Tantra, (6) Nīla Tantra, (7) Radhā Tantra, (8) Vairava Tantra, (9) Matrikāveda Tantra, (10) Samaya Tantra, (11) Maha-Nirvāṇa

Tantra, (12) Kulārṇava Tantra, (13) Yogini Tantra, (14) Yogini-Hrīdyā Tantra, (15) Sanat Kumar Tantra, (16) Tripura Tantra, (17) Vamakeswara Tantra, (18) Kula-saudāmaṇi Tantra, (19) Vābacurāmaṇi Tantra, (20) Jñāna-Curamaṇi Tantra, (21) Tantracuramaṇi Tantra, (22) Fetkarni Tantra, (23) Nitya Tantra, (24) Uttara Tantra, (25) Gautamiya Tantra, (26) Niruttara Tantra, (27) Kuvjikā Tantra, (28) Brhittasri-Karna Tantra, (29) Svataḡama Tantra, (30) Kāmakshya Tantra, etc.

In the famous sacred scripture, 'Hari Vangsa' it is mentioned that the Lord Sri Krishna obtained lessons in sixty-four Kaula Tantras from the sage Durvāsa. The Risi 'Durvāsa' is celebrated as the great propagator of non-dualistic Tantras in the Kali Yuga or Iron Age. It may be pointed out here that most of the sacred scriptures relating to Tantra Śāstra have not survived 'Time's tyrannic claim', mainly on account of their universal outlook, non-sectarian view, non-acceptance of virtue and vice, good and bad, masculine and feminine, characteristics of the Kali-Yuga which the later vedic society predominated by a particular caste viz., the Brahmins oblivious of their 'Varna' or Vedic knowledge and profession could not tolerate.

CHAPTER—III

Specific Nature of Tantra Philosophy.

The antiquity and exact nature of Āgamic Philosophy has been a matter of dispute among the scholars. It is very difficult to point out conclusively the origin of Āgamik Scriptures. The Āgamik Scriptures as a whole has branched out in three main currents, the Śaiva, the Śākta and the Vaishnava Śāstras or scriptures. Further, practically there is no such Philosophy which may be called the philosophy of Āgama Śāstras. It is unfortunate that there is no mention of 'Śāktā and Śaiva' Philosophy in the great work of Mādhyāchārya known as 'Sarvadarśana Sangraha' which was compiled in the 14th. Century A.D. 'Sarvadarśana Samuccaya' by Raj Sekhar Suri does not mention it. Even when we speak of the 6 systems of Indian Philosophy, the Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy is excluded. When we read Vedānta, Sāmhya or Nāya Philosophy or even Baudhya or Jaina Philosophy we find critical analysis, inter-pretation of one by another. In other words, we find mention of Nāya or Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya or Baudhya Philosophy in the Vedānta and it is an admitted fact that Indian Philosophy as a whole has enriched itself by mutual understanding and criticism of one another's views ; but strangely enough there is no mention of Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy in Nāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Pātanjal, Mimāṃsā, Vedānta and even in

Baudhya and Jaina Philosophy. This is due to various reasons. In the first place, it may be pointed out, that all those systems of Philosophy had their origin in the Vedas and Upanishads but Āgamic Philosophy had its origin in Āgama and Nigama revelations or Śrutis which are as old as those of the Vedas and Upanishads. In an earlier chapter, it has been pointed out that in ancient India, we had two distinct Śrutis viz., Vaidikī Śruti and Tāntriki Śruti. The orthodox systems as well as the Baudhya, Jaina and Cārvaka systems arose out of the Vaidiki Śrutis, whereas the three currents of Agamik Philosophy known as Śaiva, Śākta and Vaishnaviya Philosophy are rooted in the Āgamas and Nigamas, in one word, 'Tāntrika Śruti'. They have their distinctive specific features. Further, these Philosophical systems were generally looked down upon by the orthodox Vedic School of thought. Moreover most of the philosophers of the Āgamic school were reluctant enough to bring out a well-knit consistent system of Āgamic Philosophy. They regarded Āgama Śhastra as revelation and not philosophy. The truths of āgama, they say, are not the products of speculative thought but they are obtained by Sādhana or spiritual practices. Their philosophical vision, i.e., Non-dualism, they considered, is an achievement 'a living concrete dynamic' 'Integral Experience' and not the 'reductio ad absurdum' of Logic. The 'Kulārṇava Tantra' says, 'liberation is to be obtained by the awakening of the Kundalinī Śakti lying dormant in suliminal depth of consciousness and not by reasoning which binds more than liberates'. The 'Kamākhyā Tantra' says "Sri Guru Prasādena Muktimādaṁ sadā lavet, vicārāt Sarvaśastresu Kantakāya tataḥ sudhīḥ"

(Kāmakhyā Tantra-viii Patala). The Tantra Shāstra is pre-eminently Sādhana Śhastra or art of self-realisation. Its Philosophy is rooted in Sādhana or religious practices which in its turn has its root in revelation or Tantrik Śruti as is generally called whose origin has ever remained a mystery to us. The discovery of Māhen-jo-dāro and Hārāppā culture are pointers to early beginning of Tantric thoughts. The Indus Valley civilisation and its ruins give us the glimpse of a distinctive philosophy and culture which was not built in a day. All these 'remnants of a tattered finery' clearly exhibit some of the fundamental ideas of the most ancient and primitive culture which may be traced as far back as 4000 B.C. or more earlier. A definite clear-cut system of Philosophy is not to be found in any one of the Āgamic scriptures, just as we can not curve out any system of philosophy from any one of the Upanisadas. It is so, because all the Tantrik scriptures were not the products of a single day or even of an age. Moreover, if by philosophy we mean mere "thinking consideration of things", then surely Tantra Śhāstra has no philosophy of its own. It is a fact that in India spiritual practices or Sādhana precedes philosophy. The truths arrived at by Sādhana or living, personal experience are self-evident, direct, definite and intensely clear. These are truths not because they simply appeal to reason or to the intellect, but because they have been lived through and verified on the anvil of living experience. Hence by 'Tantra Philosophy', we mean here a philosophy of life, an art of self-realisation, an Integral Experience which is yet a mystery to the Western mind or to the westernised mind. In Western Philosophy, the faculty of super-sensuous perception and the art of awakening

the Kundalinī, the abysmal depth of consciousness is not only unintelligible but also an absurdity. In India, however, philosophy, whether Vedic or Tāntrik had its origin in Revelation and it is but the rational attempt on the part of rational human beings to harmonise, reconcile faith with reason, intuition with insight. The philosophers of old had tried to co-ordinate, harmonise the truths of philosophy with the hard concrete stubborn facts of life and its environment. No doubt, the products of reasoned reflection have an honoured place in life, but the emotional and volitional contents of our psychical life can never be repudiated nor ignored. Hence intellectual comprehension with emotional and volitional response to the concrete realities of life explains the unique and specific nature of Tantra Philosophy. The Tantra Philosophy definitely marks out an unique place in the heirarchy of the philosophical evolution of Indian thought. It is the Science of all sciences, in so far as it teaches us to know the nature of ultimate Reality permeating the universe of matter, life, mind and spirit. It is the Art of all arts, in so far it lays down the practical and practicable means of self-realisation or awakening of the Kundalinī Śakti by means of 'Rāja-Yoga' which is Yoga per excellence. Thus it is evident that Tantra philosophy may be called the Science of all sciences; for without the knowledge of the Self, a bifurcation arises between the subject and the objective world. The subject is neglected, repudiated and remains the unknown residuum of science which has bifurcated man from the rest of the universe. This has brought into existence discord, disharmony, restless passion and striving for mundane values which

characterise the present day society called scientific world enveloped in neiscience.

It has already been said that Tantra philosophy is not mere intellectual comprehension ; so it has not brought into existence two extremes :—(a) Sannyāsī order whose aim is complete renunciation and whose philosophy is obtained by negation b) the materialistic order whose philosophy states that life, mind and consciousness are nothing but the result of mechanical energy or motion leading to a materialistic ethics preaching the gospel of ‘Eat, drink and be merry’, there is nothing beyond death, the self is nothing other than the not-self. The Tantra philosophy has fought out those two extremes, the Sannyāsī order or the order of renunciation leading to denunciation of all that is and the materialistic order leading to the negation of Self. It strikes out a middle path, the path of harmony, of reconciling the two extremes : renunciation of the objective order and denunciation of the Self, the way of co-ordinating the so called irreconcilable factors viz., the self and the world. The Tantra philosophy is the philosophy of ‘Integral Experience.’ Human Experience is of twofold nature :-

(a) The whole or the ‘Integral Experience’ and (b) partial or incomplete experience. It has been said, in Tantra philosophy the All-Consciousness or Macro-cosmic consciousness is Śiva or upward-looking (un-mukhī). This means Śiva is not looking to another ; for there is no other than Śiva himself. Incomplete or partial experience or Jiva who is outward looking (Bahirmukhī). It is evident that ‘Integral Experience’ is not the experience

of any whole, for the whole is within the experience, 'All-consciousness' or the Macrocosmic consciousness. The bahirmukhī experience or outward-looking experience or the experience of the objective order, i.e., the fact-section is not the experience of the parts of the whole ; for the whole or the Integral Experience is not divisible into parts, it is the experience of the parts in the whole. The Tantra calls the former experience 'Pūrṇa' or 'Pūrṇāhantā'. It is not the logical residuum of abstracting intellect but a plenum in which the All is All-consciousness. Thus Tantra philosophy does not look upon man through the coloured glass of gross matter or through the window of an equally insipid romantic sentimentalistic Idealism. The Tantra Philosophy is an unique attempt to grasp and comprehend life and experience in its entirety which is neither a dream nor indulgence in passion for all sorts of romanticism, sentimentalism ; nor an intellectual negation and renunciation and escape from the realities of life. Hence Tantra philosophy does not use examples for illustrating, describing and defining their aims and objects from any particular angle of vision. Even to the casual reader, it will appear that its literature and philosophy are very outspoken against any system of philosophy, whether it is orthodox or heterodox. A disciple of Tantra philosophy should approach life and experience without any bias. It is rooted in every day experience of life where men and women are wedded together elevating each other to the height of 'All-consciousness', where the eternal 'Feminine' and eternal 'Masculine' persist 'through all eternity in inseperable union. Tantra philosophy ends in the realisation of super-sensuous vision of Śiva-Śakti or Rādha-Krishna in

eternal embrace beyond space, beyond time, beyond the causal nexus, beyond the cravings of the flesh. In such a vision, there is ecstatic bliss, there is no pang of separation, no negation but positive realisation. The polarity of sex into man and woman must be resolved so that all bheda or differences are transcended, without it man and woman will be the 'Pāsa' bondage or limiting power of each other which binds us to mundane values, but when the identity is affirmed and realised, the twin limiting forces are sublimated in an 'Integral All-consciousness' where no longer remains any limitation. Man and Woman will thus be introverted, sublimated into the macro-cosmic 'All-consciousness' and glorified into Śiva-Śakti or 'Radhā-Krishna' in inalienable union. Here the psycho-physical union of man and woman is transmuted into the creative union, 'Ullāsa' of Śiva-Śakti. The ecstasy arising out of the 'Śiva-Śakti' union is 'Nāda' or macrocosmic sound and the seed that emerges in the act of union is 'Vindu' or Śiva-tattva. In supreme realisation, the 'Aham' or the self and 'Idam' or the knower and the known, the Enjoyer and the Enjoyed must be equated to each other in one fundamental Unity which is 'Śiva-Śakti' or Self-conscious, self-luminous-Intelligence. The out-going current or Bahirmukhatā, differentiates, diversificates, bifurcates. It generates in the individual the sense of exclusiveness, isolation ; the upward going-current or the return-current enables the individual to realise progressively the 'All-consciousness' or macro-cosmic consciousness and generates a sense of identification. The former leads to bondage and suffering, the latter leads to the recognition of the same self here, there and everywhere, which means harmony, peace, divinity, immortality and freedom. This is the

highest end or ideal or 'purusārtha' which the Āgamic philosophy enunciates in contradistinction to all other systems of Philosophy.

One of the main characteristics of all Indian Philosophy is to point out the highest purusārtha or liberation from bondage to sufferings. The Tantra Śāstra has a philosophy in common with other Indian Philosophical systems in so far as it lays down the summum bonum of life and formulates the ways and means of its realisation. It replaces the ascetic ideal of renunciation by sublimation, by harnessing the psycho-physical organism into the service of the self's self-recognition. It is not a philosophy of austerity which leads to renunciation and denunciation of all, viz., the material and the mental. It enables us by the practice of Yoga and Tapas, to awaken the faculty of super-sensuous perception by virtue of which we discover the same self in every level of experience namely the material plane, the vital plane, the mental plane etc. It is non-dualistic in character not because it negates all dualism, but because it enables us to realise the All-consciousness permeating all. It does not regard the world as a hell of sorrow to be afraid of. It does not consider human life as full of jargons, 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing' and hence to be renounced and denounced. The Tantra Philosophy is the affirmation of the whole world-order as 'the vale of soul-making', as the real objective play ground, 'Lila-Kshetra' of Śiva-Śakti whose Unmesa or shining forth is the world order and whose 'Nimesa or recognition of its pristine glory is 'Śiva-Śakti Sāmarasya or self-conscious, self luminous, transcendent Intelligence, immanent in all,

comprehending all in its embrace. The body is the sacred dwelling place, the temple of the self. It is the generating plant of happiness, ecstatic bliss. It is the sanctuary in which Śiva remains asleep enveloped in its own power of neiscience, or Māyā-Śakti, it is at the same time the nursery of the self from which the self awakens from its deep cavern of slumbering memory to the daylight of self-shinning, self-luminous, Intelligence or 'Śiva'. It is evident that the Absolute of Āgamic philosophy is not pure abstract consciousness as the vedantins hold. It is 'prakāśa' in inseparable union with 'Vimarsa', i.e., it is not pure Cīṭ but Citrūpinī. It is not simply self-luminous like a diamond but it is also self-conscious, it is conscious of its intrinsic dynamic power of self-manifestation. This is 'All-consciousness' or 'Cosmic Consciousness' 'Anuttara' that is the highest Reality beyond which there is nothing. Thus in the monumental work, 'Tantrāloka' Abhinava Gupta says, "If the highest Reality did not shine forth in infinite variety but ever remained in insipid isolation, it would neither be the highest Power nor Consciousness nor 'Cīṭ' but something like a Jar" (Tantraloka-Chapter-III). Thus the Absolute Brahma or Parama Śiva is 'Prakāśa-Vimarsāṭ-maya'. It is not a contentless, featureless barren abstraction, but it is the 'Purnāhantā', the all-perfect, all-comprehensive Integral Experience which is called Śakti and has been regarded as 'the Heart of the Supreme Lord'. This Śakti of the Supreme or the Absolute is called Citrūpinī or Parā Śakti of Śiva. It is evident that such a conception of the Absolute is to be realised not by negation of all but by the transfiguration of all. This is the Advaita Philosophy or Philosophy of the 'Absolute self-conscious, self-luminous, Intelligence'

in inseparable union with its essence namely intrinsic dynamism for shinning forth. This distinguishes the non-dualistic philosophy of Āgama from the non-dualistic philosophy of Ācārya Śankara.

Like all other Indian systems of Philosophy, the Tantra preaches the doctrine of liberation or Mukti. Liberation here is not the product of speculative thought or of any act of negation of the realities of life but it is only the recognition of Śiva in Jiva shorn of all imperfections and impurities. Observed from within or its essence man is the centre, the plenum of all activities ; observed from without man appears to be the human body ; man seen from within are his thoughts, feelings, emotions, aspirations, the unknown peeping through the windows of the known, the infinite and the eternal enveloped in its finitude and limitations. Man is the centripetal point in the Universe and the whole Universe remains condensed in him. Thus the World order, the fact-section is a pointer to the significance, the meaning of human existence. Mass and energy are equivalents. If the latter is shorn of its mass and travels with the speed of light we speak of energy and if energy conjeals we ascertain its mass ; but says Einstein, 'The unknown yet remains in the unfathomable depth, we have only touched the physical aspect of the entire cosmos'. The highly technical and industrial civilisation has neglected, repudiated, crucified and humiliated man, the centre of the universe. The abstract, scientific attitude of today has made it extremely' difficult for us to understand and appreciate the fundamental unity of man and nature. No doubt, man has his foothold on earth exactly as the

plants, mountains and animals, but he also belongs to and located in the centripetal point. Man knows what this point is not by mathematical, conceptual abstraction but by the development of macro-cosmic consciousness, i.e., All-consciousness by virtue of which he recognises the intrinsic divinity in him and attains immortality and freedom. This is the specific character of Tantra Philosophy.

In an earlier chapter, it has already been pointed out that Indian Philosophy whether it is the philosophy of the Upanisad or philosophy of Āgama has its origin in revelation or Śruti. Revealed Truths are self-evident, immediate, definite and intensely clear. Faith in revealed truth is the passport to the citadel of philosophy in India. These revealed truths were transmitted from generation to generation to disciples which were stored up in their memory. After a long interval of years, it may be said, thousands of years, these revelations were codified, compiled, interpreted in the philosophic literature of India. Hence in India Śabda-Pramāna or Śruti-Pramāna is the highest authority, the sole arbitrator whose authority and authenticity cannot be challenged. The other pramānas, such as perception, inference etc. are subservient to it and philosophy in India is the art of bringing into the focus of self-consciousness the spiritual legacies of the Risis or prophets of old. Hence the Risis and Ācāryas hold the supreme place of reverence. This is the Indian standpoint. It has been observed that in Bhārat, we have two kinds of Śrutis, Vaidikī and Tantrikī. The Vaidikī revelation consists of the truths of the Vedas whose place of origin is 'Āryāvarta'. The Āgamik or Tāntrik revelation are predominant in parts of India other than 'Āryāvarta'.

The former gave birth to the six systems of Philosophy namely Nāya, Vaiśeika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimāṃsa and Vadānta as well as the Cārvaka, Baudha and Jaina Philosophy. The Āgamik revelations gave birth to Śaiva and Śākta Philosophy, the latter comprehending within itself a later development known as Vaisnava Philosophy. In India, religion precedes philosophy and philosophy is but the interpretation of revelation by means of reasoned reflection the religious experience of the Indian people in a variety of forms. Philosophy is here considered as justification of faith by reason. This explains why Indian Philosophy is more practical in outlook than mere 'thinking consideration of things'. If we go back to the origin of Āgamik or Tantrik philosophy, we have to refer to Āgama Śāstra or the Tantra Śāstra of later period, i.e., the mediaeval period between 2000 and 1500 B.C. Śiva-Darsana or Śaiva Philosophy, as it is called, is the first and earliest philosophical interpretation of Tantrikī Śruti. The Śākta and Vaisnava philosophies are later developments out of Śaiva Philosophy. This is evident from the fact that in Śaiva Philosophy Parama-Śiva or the Absolute has been conceived as consciousness in inalienable union with Śakti i.e., Prakāśa-Vimarsamaya. Śiva is Integral Experience of the experiencer forming one whole. This Integral Experience is the heart of the Absolute or Parama Śiva ('Hridayam Parameswarḥ'). Without this essence of intrinsic dynamism, Śiva will be no other than a jar, an ordinary inert material thing. It is evident that this conception of the Absolute as 'Śiva-Śakti-Sama-Rasatā' or All-conscious-power of enjoying ecstatic bliss, of free will, of omniscience has given birth to Śākta Philosophy as well as Vaishnava Philosophy. That is why it is a

sacred belief of the Śāktas and Vaishnavas that without the worship of Śīva, no worship is fruitful. It has been enjoined by the Śāktas that 'Śīva is the ultimate Lord of all', 'Ādināṭha Śīva-Śakshāt'. This Śīva in Vaidikī pantheon as well as in Tantrik parlance has been considered to be the highest Reality. And this Śīva, it has been already said, is the connecting link between the Vaidikī and the Tantrik Śruti. Hence Śīva has the most honoured place in both the Vedas and the Tantras. According to the Vaisnavas also, worship of Śīva is indispensable for a Vaishnavite. Śīva is also considered as the supreme Guru, the highest and supreme source of the revealed truths of Āgama Tantra. In his well known commentary on Brahma-Sūtra (11.238) Śrīkantha declares, 'In his view the Vedas can be properly called Śīva Āgamas, because Śīva is their author and consequently Śīva-Āgamas are of two fold ; those meant for the three Varnas and those for general acceptance'.

An in-depth study of Śaiva Philosophy, will reveal, even to the casual reader, that Śaiva Philosophy is the outcome of Śīva religion. In India it is a fact of history that Indian Philosophical thoughts and ideas arose out of the varieties of religious experience of our earlier forefathers and in fact in explaining religion, philosophy has explained itself. It is no wonder that Śaiva Philosophy is rooted in Śaiva religion or belief in Śīva as the highest ultimate Reality. It is not possible within the purview of this book to mention and explain the different types of Śaiva Philosophy in their details ; for that will be an encyclopaedia of Śaivism. Mention, therefore, will be made here, of some of the

fundamental features of Śaivism under three main types of philosophy prevalent in India, namely Tamil Śaivism of the South. Mādhyācārya in his 'Sarvadarsana Samgraha' has classified Śaiva Philosophy under four heads :—(1) Nakulisa-Pāśupāta, (2) Śaiva, (3) Pratyavijñā and (4) Rasārṇava. The oldest manuscript of Nakulisa-pāśupāta School which has so far been found is known as Pāśupāta-Sutram (1st. or 2nd. B.C.). The first and foremost preceptor of the School is celebrated as Nakulīśa. Kaundinya wrote a commentary on the text but the original text and the commentary cannot be called Philosophy proper ; they mainly dwell upon religion and yogic practices. Their doctrines were prevalent in Western India. Mādhyācārya in his famous compendium, 'Sarvadarsana Samgraha', has said that Śaiva philosophy prevailed in South India and its main doctrines have been fully explained in 'Tattvaparakāśa' by the famous Acarya Vojarāja who lived round about Eleventh Century A.D. The commentaries of Tattvaparakāśa by Śrī Kumara and Śivācārya are philosophical interpretation and explanations of the doctrine of Tattvaparakāśa. The original texts are known as Āgamas. They are (a) Mṛigendrāgama, (b) Pauskarāgama, (c) Tattasamgraha, (d) Tattaparakāśa, (e) Kālottarāgama, (f) Kāruṇāgama, (g) Kiraṇāgama etc. There were also prevalent in Tamil land another branch of Śaiva Philosophy known as Tamil Śaivism. Tamil Śaivism is based on revelation. Most of the literatures of this school was written in Tamil language. Some of the Āgamas of this School are found in Sanskrit and Prākṛita. This literature is extensive and complex. As most of the doctrines have been written in Tamil language

and prevailed in the Tamil land, their philosophy is known as Tamil Śaivism. The celebrated Ācāryas of this school are ; (a) Appara (b) Tirujñāna (c) Sambandhara (d) Sundaramurti and (e) Mānikya Vāsagāra. They were celebrated as Samayācāryas. These great Ācāryas, however, did not try to bring out any consistent philosophy of the Śaiva religion. Philosophical interpretation of Śaiva Siddhānta was made by their successors namely (a) Mukundadeva, (b) Arunandi and (c) Umapati Śivācārya. It is said that 'Sivajñāna Bodham' (13th. Century A.D.) of Mukundadeva is the fundamental work of Śaiva Siddhānta. 'Sivajñānasiddhiyar' by Acarya Arundira is a celebrated philosophical treatise of Śaiva Siddhānta. There are also other treatises most of which are now extinct. It is of utmost importance to make a special note here, that both the Pāśupāta School of West India and the Śaiva Siddhānta of Tamil land have elaborated three fundamental principles namely 'Paśu' meaning the individual Jiva, 'Pati' meaning the Śiva and 'pāsa' or bondage to suffering. Both maintain the common doctrine viz., absolute cessation of suffering for all times to come. Both also hold the view that 'Śiva' is the ultimate goal and that 'Śiva and Śakti' inseparably exist as the highest Absolute. Though we find tendencies towards dualism and pluralism in some of their doctrines, yet their main tendency is towards a non-dualistic Philosophy. Dualism or Pluralism is for the individual Jiva but in Śiva-realisation or the realisation of the Supreme Ideal all doctrines vanish. This is the common goal of all kinds of Śaiva Philosophy whether in ancient or modern India. Śaiva Philosophy has a variety of forms, richness of content and these varieties are due to the

specific reaction and adaptability of the peoples of South India and Western India living in different geographical environment, climatic conditions, speaking different languages and having innumerable customs and traditions. The outward forms of religion and varieties of religious experiences are always to be regarded to have ever influenced the inwardness of religion but ultimately the exoteric practices disappear in the sublime depth of Integral Experience, which is 'Śiva'.

In Northern India, specially in Kashmir, we have a very profound form of 'Advaita Śaivism' or rather Advaita Śāktaism celebrated as Trika Philosophy. The literature of the Triku falls into three divisions :-

- A. The Āgama-Śāstra.
- B. The Spanda-Śāstra.
- C. The Pratyabhijñā-Śāstra.

It is said by the great scholar, Jagadis Chandra Chatterjee that "The Trika form of Śaivism would seem to have made its first appearance in Kashmir towards the end of the 18th. Century of the Christian era. Śaivāgama, that is Śaivism is far older than this". Śivāgama is regarded as having eternal existence like the Vedic revelation. What are called the Śaivāgamas are nothing but divine revelations from the five faces of Śiva Himself. These Five faces according to the Āgamas are symbols of the five-fold power and glory of Śiva Viz., Ciṭ, Ānanda Ichhā, Jñāna and Kriyā, which again are respectively

called Isāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Aghora and Vāma. The 'Śiva Śāstras which were revealed from the five faces of the Deity consisted originally of Sixty Four Āgamas or spiritual scriptures of Tantra. These Sixty four Āgamas gradually disappeared with the incoming of the Kali-Yuga and with the gradual disappearance of the Rishis or prophets who were the repositories of the sacred knowledge and thus with the disappearance of the Śāstras the world became engrossed in spiritual darkness. The Great Lord Śiva took pity on man appearing on the Kailasa peak in the form of 'Śri Kantha', commanded the sage Durvāsa to spread in the world the knowledge of the Śāstras again. Durvāsa communicated the Śāstras to three disciples (Mānas Putras) :- (1) Trayambaka (2) Amardaka and (3) Shrinatha whom he charged with the mission of spreading and teaching Śaiva faith. This is the legendary account of high antiquity. It is evident that the Āgama Śāstras or Revelation is regarded as of Divine origin. They are revelations which are believed to have descended as the word Āgama indicates, through the ages, being handed down from teacher to pupil. Among the works belonging to the Āgama-Śāstra there is a number of Tantras, such as, mention may be made of some of the most important works. (a) Malini Vijaya or Malini Vijayottara Tantra. (b) Svachchanda Tantra. (c) Vijiñana Bhairava Tantra. (d) Uchchushma Bhairava Tantra. (e) Mrigendra Tantra. (f) Mātanga Tantra. (g) Netra Tantra. (h) Nishvasa Tantra. (i) Svayambhuva Tantra. (j) Rudra-Yamala Tantra (from which the famous Para Trinishika verses are said to be taken). There are also famous comentaries on some of the above mentioned Tantras. Thus we have 'Uddota' a comentary on Svachchanda

Tantra, Netra Tantra on Vijñana-Bhairava Tantra and Vritti a commentary of Mātanga Tantra. In these commentaries we find a great attempt to show that the Tantras or Āgama-Sāstras taught the Advaita Tattva or Non-dualism. It may be pointed out here, that in some of the above Tantras there are ample evidences of dualistic preachings, it is said that it was to stop this dualistic tendency and to point out that the highest form of the Śivāgama taught only the pure Advaita Tattva or non-dualistic philosophy, the Śiva-Sūtras whose authorship is attributed to Śiva Himself and therefore which are of divine origin were revealed to the Sage Vāsugupta who must have lived towards the end of the 8th. Century A.D. The Śiva-Sūtras may be said to be the foundation, the origin of Trika Philosophy. There are famous commentaries on Śiva-Sūtras (1) Śiva-Sūtra-Vritti, the authorship of this commentary has not yet been asserted. (2) The Vārtika of Bhaskara and (3) famous commentary called Vimarshinī by the Great Acārya Kshemaraja. Then we come to the Second Division of Trika literature known as the Spanda-Śāstra. This scripture lays down broadly the main principles of the Trika System in a greater detail than the 'Śiva-Sūtra'. But we hardly come across any philosophical reasoning here. The important treatises belonging to these śāstras are (1) The Spanda-Sutra generally known as the Spanda-Kārika. The Spanda Kārika is collectively known as Sangraha grantha that is a collection of the implications of 'Śiva-Sūtras'. Kshemaraja attributes its authorship to Vāsugupta himself. On these Spanda-Sūtra, the Vritti by Kallata is important. There are also important commentaries on the Spanda-Sūtras namely (1) Viritti by Ramakanta, a pupil of the

great Acārya Utpala. (2) The Pradipikā by Utpala Vaisnava. (3) The Spanda-Sandahas and Spanda-Nirnaya by Khemarāja. In all these Spanda literatures we find the first glimpse of a fulfilled Advaita Philosophy enunciated by the great master in the Pratyavijñā-Śāstra which may be regarded as philosophy proper of Trika System. The Śiva-Sūtra containing the quintessence of Śaiva-Philosophy thus reminds us of the great sage, Vāsugupta who must have lived towards the end of the Eighth Century A.D. Vāsugupta was a great pioneer of non-dualistic Śaiva Philosophy. It was through his pupil Kallāta who lived according to Rājataranginī in the days of King Avanti Barman (855-883 A.D.), Kallāta spread the knowledge contained in the Sūtras. Another celebrated pupil of Vāsugupta was Somānanda who may be called the father of Śaiva Philosophy proper. He is regarded as the celebrated founder of Pratyavijñā Śāstras. He must have lived towards the end of the ninth century A.D. It may be pointed out here that Kallāta may be said to have handed down the religious preachings of his spiritual preceptor. Somānanda supplemented and supported it by philosophical and logical reasoning and laid the foundation of Śaiva Advaita Philosophy. Somānanda is also spoken of as the originator of philosophical reasoning ('Tarkasyakartā' Tantraloka-Chapter 1. 10). His first work 'Śiva Dristi' which is the same as 'Śiva Darsana' has already been referred to. He had a disciple named Utpala who wrote Iswara-pratyavijñā. It has been said that this work is only the reflection of the wisdom taught by Somānanda. There are also very important works of this school of which the following are the most famous ; (1) The Vritti by Utpala himself (available now in

incomplete form). (2) The Pratyavijñā Vimarsinī by Ācārya Avinava Gupta. (3) The Pratyavijñā-Vritti Vimarsinī by the same author and finally there is the great encyclopaedic work viz., 'Tantrāloka' by Acarya Avinabagupta. Thus it will be seen that the origin of the Advaita Śaiva Śākta Philosophy must be traced to the end of the eighth century and they were founded by men who were regarded as great prophets.

In concluding this chapter we may say that Tantra philosophy has been very fruitful in effectuating a coordination of Jñāna or knowledge, Karma or action, Yoga and Bhakti. Its emphasis is, no doubt, on knowledge but it has also pointed out the place and importance of self-surrender, mercy and grace as playing vital role in the regeneration of man. It is the meeting ground of perfect Advaita Jñanam with the most sublime Bhakti and the most passionate love for ultimate Reality.

CHAPTER—IV

Common Features of The Vedas And Tantras.

Two sacred Śrutis or sacred scriptures are regarded as the fountain of all that is Indian from straw to the gold. The whole of Indian culture, ancient and modern is governed by the Vaidika and Tantrika revelations and holy scriptures. India is an epitome of the world, containing a variety of races, languages, innumerable customs, traditions, climatic conditions, multifarious religious and moral practices. In spite of this rich variety of thoughts and activities, India has ever exhibited a fundamental unity, a synthetic, synoptic view of the world and human life. The Vaidik and Tantrik revelations or śrutis do not contradict each other, these revelations have their common origin in the super-sensuous perception or 'Aparokṣha Anubhuti' of the seers of old. They constitute the proof of all proofs and hence can not be validated by any other means. Revelations are not the result of logical analysis or discursive thought, they are self-evident, immediate, definite and intensely clear ; they are not mental constructions which are somehow to be adjusted to the structure of reality. They do not speak of any mundane values, they indicate direct communications from the divine to human beings who are humanly divine, they are not matters of individual opinion, nor have they their origin in ordinary human authorship. Thus the two

revealed truths, though distinct, do not contradict each other. They differ in respect of esoteric and exoteric practices, methods of worship, yet regarding the "Summum Bonum" of life they are unanimous. But do not make any distinction between the self and Brahma or Absolute Reality. The Philosophy which they teach is not dualism but non-dualism. They have pointed out an intrinsic unity, permeating, yet transcending all forms of manifestation such as the physical plane, the vital plane, the mental plane of the macrocosm. Their doctrines, their philosophy, intense revolutionary reflective thought, methods of worship, all lead to the same goal, viz., the discovery of self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence by intellectual logical comprehension, yet attainable by super-sensuous perception. They teach with one voice that the creative urge or the will-to create within the Absolute is the intrinsic dynamism or Ānanda Śakti of the Supreme Reality. The entire universe is rooted in Brahma, creation indicates the continuous self-manifestation or rather, self-ingression of the same self, and as there is nothing but the self, its manifestation is its state of self-illumination. The same self when considered absolutely or as it is an itself is the Absolute in its unmanifested identity, pure and simple. Both the scriptures hold that the self is not a logical abstraction, it is "Purnāhantā", self-conscious, self-luminous, dynamic, spiritual principle in inseparable union with its Ānanda-śakti or ecstatic Bliss. Out of the fulness of joy within, it creates and re-creates itself and realises itself in an through the universe of persons and objects. Creation is the ceaseless continuation of Divine play (Lila) "Brahma Khelā Idam Sarvaṃ Sarvaṃ Khvalidam Brahmaḥ. (Sarvollasa

Tantram)". Self-realisation or Brahmahood is not a contentless, featureless barren abstraction or negation but positive realisation, it is not self-contradiction but self-realisation.

The various levels which are permeated by the self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence as ultimate reality, in and through which it shines forth are (a) The Bhurloka, the physical plane. (b) The Bhubarloka. (c) The Svarloka, the terrestrial plane. (d) The Maharloka. (e) The Jñaloka (f) The Tapahloka and (g) The Satyaloka. Together they form the hierarchy of conscious centres within the spiritual life as well as the world outside. For the spiritually initiated and elevated it is an Integral Experience in which all apparent contradictions are harmonised, reconciled. In such a blissfull state of perfection all dualism vanishes.

There have been attempts to show that the ideal of Upanishadic philosophy in respect of Brahma or the Absolute is that the Absolute is absolutely indeterminate, it involves the negation of all attributes ; but if no apprehension of the ultimate Reality or the Absolute is possible except by the negation of all attributes, all kinds of relations, "Neti Neti", certainly the Absolute remains unknown and unknowable. This is sheer scepticism and not the view of the Upanishads, neither the real implication of Āchārya Śhankara's interpretation of the śrutis. What these scriptures wanted to confirm is that if the senses or intellect have their limitations, the necessity of the opening up of the third eye (Divya Chakṣhu) or the faculty of super-sensuous perception is the supreme condition

of realising the ultimate Truth. When we wake up from the state of Avidyā or self-obliviousness to the state of self-recognition, from our imprisonment within the prison-house of the senses and the intellect, the self is known. It shines forth in its pristine glory as the self-shining, self-luminous, self-conscious Intelligence. This is the quintessence of the Vedic Savitrī Gāyatri as well as the Tantrik Gāyatri. The seven Vyahritis or levels of self-realisation enunciated in the Vedas, and the seven cakras or conscious centres through which the self realises itself mean the same thing, the seven stages through which the spiritual pilgrim has to traverse in order to attain the Kingdom of Heaven and for complete and absolute cessation of sufferings. Here we find a common feature between the Vedas and Tantras. It is to be noted here that even the great Ācārya Śankara who is regarded as the indisputable and the foremost interpreter of not only the Vedic Śrutis but also of the Tantras has admitted in his monumental works, “Prapancasāra”, “Soundarya Lahari” in which the Tantrik Śrī-Vidyā and Śrī Cakra have been masterly enunciated and explained. These are standing testimonies to his acceptance and acknowledgment of the two distinct śrutis preaching the same Truth. In his earlier interpretation of the Upanishada and in his “Śāriraka-Vāsyā”, he might have leaned towards an abstract Reality, but undoubtedly his Dikṣha or spiritual initiation by Govindapādācārya and his masterly interpretation of Śrī-Vidyā and Śrī-Cakra as very valuable treasures of Tantrā Śāstra clearly indicates a marked progress and considered revision which is confirmed by his own saying :- “Śiva, the Supreme Lord, ever remains in inseparable union with power without which there can

be no manifestation self-ingression of the Absolute. In such case, Śiva would be regarded as dead inertia shorn of his intrinsic dynamism.

Explaining the above he says, “The ultimate or the Absolute remains in inseparable union with his intrinsic power called ‘Vimarsa-Śakti’ viz., the power of shining forth of which He is ever conscious, i.e., self-conscious. This “Vimarsa” Śakti is expressive of his own nature as self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. Without this intrinsic Vimarsa, the Absolute or Para-Brahman can not be self-conscious of his own nature as pure Being, supreme joy and absolute consciousness. This Vimarsa is his own power of manifestation, the intrinsic will-to-create which is not inspired by anything outside of Himself.

Further both the Vedas and the Tantras proclaim with one voice the oneness and supremacy of Chaitanya as Conscious power, as the foundation and source of creation, preservation and destruction. We find in the Rig Veda (10 Mandals 25 Sukta) this Conscious power ecstatic Bliss Ananda is identified with the Absolute or Brahman. This Goddess is the ‘I’ (Aham or the supreme self, the matrix of the whole universe, the Prime Mother of all Gods, so also the Kena Upanishad says, “The Goddess Uma Haimabati manifested herself in the terrestrial region. In the Svetasetara Upanishad, we come across the aphorism. “The ultimate Reality is endowed with multifarious powers especially omniscience, omnipotence and free-will to create”. Ishoponishad holds “Isāvasyāmidam” viz., that which permeates

all is Brahman or the Absolute, conscious-power pervading everything, matter, life, mind. Mahama-padhya Durga Charan Sāṅkhya Vedanta Tirtha in his Bengali version of Śāṅkara's commentary on Taittiriya Upanishad has stated—"The Absolute or Brahman in the process of self-manifestation in the world of names and forms, does not lose in any way his real nature or Brahmahood, because all these names and forms under all circumstances and in all places remain in "Brahma or the Absolute". This is supported by the Upanishadic saying "Ahaṁ bahusyāma" 'I shall be many'. Thus it is evident that in respect of the Absolute or Brahma both the scriptures hold the same view and both entertain a non-dualistic philosophy.

Secondly, in both the scriptures, the self as Ātman has been considered in two distinct states. In the Vaidika Śruti (a) the self enveloped by Māya or the limiting power of cosmic illusion and (b) the self as the eternally self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. Similarly in the Tantrika Śruti we find :- (a) The State of Self-obliviousness viz., the individualised Jiva and (b) the Śiva, the awakened self (Prabhudāṭma).

An indepth study of the two sacred scriptures will reveal that both advocated the same method of self-realisation viz., "Kundalinī Yoga". They unanimously and equivocally declare that without the awakening of the dormant conscious centres no body can attain the supreme status, 'Brahmapada' or the state of self-realisation. It is therefore of importance to know that this 'Kundalinī Yoga' or 'Raja Yoga' per excellence has been preached in Tantra

and Veda as the *conditio sine quibus non*, indispensable condition of self-realisation.

The awakening of the 'Kundalinī Śakti' which comprises within its fold macro-cosmic power, macro-cosmic energy or procreative energy or the 'Elan Vital', the autonomous onward, upward march for self-realisation constitutes the quintessence of what is called Indian Sādhana or Spiritualism. In the Vedas as well as in the Tantras, whenever the term, 'Self-Control' has been used, it has always meant liberation from bondage to self-obliviousness. In the 'Kathopanishada' it has been stated, the heart consists of a hundred and one main nerve-channels ; among these the Susumnā or the median nerve is the most fundamental. The median nerve penetrates the thousand-petalled lotus of the brain centre figuratively called the "Sahasrāra", When this state is attained by self-control, the individual is liberated. While commenting on the aphorism of the "Chāndogya" Upanishada, Acārya Śankara aptly annotates "One who meditates on Brahmah or the self in the heart nerve centre, in Sanskrit called the "Anāhata Cakra", gradually reaches the "Brahmaloka" in the thousand petalled lotus of the pericarp of the brain and finally attains liberation." In his famous commentary on an aphorism of the "Bhāgavata Gita", the Acārya says, "Prior to the realisation of the supreme state, the Yogin has to control his citta in the "Anāhata Cakra" by exciting the heart-nerve centre, the 'elen vital', life-current and the 'Kundalinī' reaches the "Ājñā Cakra" situated in the middle of the eye-brow or the region of super-sensuous perception". It is evidently transparent that 'Cakra-Sādhana' or the art of realising

the supreme state of self-luminous, self-conscious macro-cosmic Consciousness in and through the various levels of conscious centres was commonly prevalent both in the Vedas and in the Tantras. Bhojarāja, the celebrated interpreter of Patanjali Yoga philosophy comments, "The art of transmitting vital and psychical forces through the naval centre, "Manipura Cakra" to the brain-centre figuratively called, the "Sahasrā-Cakra" is called the process of "Udghāta." The great sage Jāgñavalka says, 'When the vital air is stimulated and transmitted through the naval centre, the whole psychophysical organism is energised, as every part of a cloth consists of cotton. The yogavāśita says, 'just as a bee softly moves on a lotus', similarly "Kundalinī", the root support and ground of all psychical powers when moves softly inside the psychophysical organism, slight sensation is felt but when it gets momentum in its speed, there is intense realisation'. In the 'Māndukya Upanishada', it has been stated that the self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence i. e., 'Kundalinī Śakti' which by its own power of self-limitation remains in a static state gradually unfolds itself through various nerve centres by means of meditation, tapaḥ, yoga and Brahmacharya or self-control. Now, it is very clear that this "Kundalinī Yoga" per excellence is the very tap-root of Hindu culture, Vaidika as well as Tantrika. The great sages of old adopted and practised this "Art of all arts" as the indispensable method of self-realisation. By energising the sleeping, dormant psychophysical forces, the Vaidika as well as the Tantrika sages attained discipline of the body, control of the vital airs and mind, then carried this difficult and thorny task further to the awakening of the intrinsic divinity in humanity, in

breaking through man's bondage to micro-cosmic consciousness and reached their goal in the establishment of macro-cosmic consciousness i. e., 'All-consciousness'. This is the Summum Bonum of human life, commonly held by both the Śrutis or revealed scriptures, the Vedas and the Tantras. It means the transfiguration of the finite into the limitless divine nature, the indwelling informing spirit of all working itself out in and through the microcosm and the macrocosm.

Further, the Bhārata Dharma or religion of India has found expression in and through three distinct forms according to the natural tendencies and aptitudes of the Sādhaka or spiritual pilgrim viz., the Śaiva-Cult, the Śākta-Cult and the Vaishnava-Cult. It is needless to say that the Śaiva and Śākta cults are rooted in Kundalinī Yoga. But there is an opinion prevalent among some Vaisnavas that Vaisnava religion is based on 'Bhakti Yoga' and Bhakti Yoga means mere self-surrender to God. Those few who among the Vaisnavas realise divine communion in the human form, however, know that the realisation of 'Rādhā Tattva' is the Summum Bonum, parama preyaḥ and parama sreyaḥ, the ultimate goal of Vaisnava Sādhana. Sree Rādhā in Vaisnavism does not, in truth, mean a historical human being in the feminine form. She is the eternal Feminine in the male form, the indwelling informing will-power or "Ānanda Śakti" or "Vimarsa Śakti" of the ultimate Reality who is no other than self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. The Brahmavaibarta Purāna says, the letter 'Rā' and the letter 'dhā' together means Nirvana mukti, and as she is the giver of the supreme realisation, she is called 'Rādhā'. There are some Vaisnava

commentators who say, 'Adhāra-Vasinitwaṭ Rādhā', as she is the indwelling informing spiritual principle having her abode in the 'Mulādhāra Cakra', she is called 'Rādhā'. A great Sādhaka once said that the true implication of the term, "Rādhā" is to be found in its converse, i. e., 'dhārā' which means latent power-current in the Mulādhāra Cakra in her sleeping dormant state i. e., no other than the Tantrik 'Kundalinī Śakti' or Mahāmāyā. In the 'Br̥hat Śrīkrama', She has been described as, "Bakribhuta punarvāme prathamankurmgata icchadā-nasamāyoge Rondir sriugaranagata Parabr̥h̥ma-swarupā sā Tripurā Parameśwari." This is the self-conscious, self-luminous will-to-create in inseparable union with Her consort or Absolute consciousness, Param Brahma. She is the intrinsic dynamism of the onward upward rush of the first flutter of life, 'Prathama Spandaḥ'. A celebrated Vaisnava authority has very beautifully and aptly said "Ujjala prakriyā rasa visuddaḥ prakriti". She is the first will-to-create, the eternal feminine power in man. Accu-tānanda, a celebrated commentator of "Ānanda Lahari", says, "Śringārasasya rajaguna-prādhānyāṭ arunattvaṃ". In other words "Śringāra Rasa" or the first flutter of sex-energy is characterised by 'Raja-guna' meaning power, energy and whose colour is red. In the Rādhā-Tantra, Śrī Rādhā has been described as 'Raktavidyut-Pravā', she flashes like red lightning. In the Śakti-Tantra she is described as 'Rasa'. The Nitya Vrindāvana is figuratively so called but in reality and to the supersensuous perception of the Rishi it is the thousand pettalled lotus in the pericap of the brain-centre where there is the eternal Rāsa-lilā of Sree Krishna and Sri Rādhā, the inseparable union of macrocosmic consciousness with power. It is evident that

‘Rādhā-Śakti’ is no other than ‘Kundalinī Śakti’ in inseparable union with Absolute consciousness. In the face of all these evidences, we are forced to the inevitable conclusion that the essence of Bhārata Dharma, Vaidika or Tantrika consists in Kundalinī Yoga, the indispensable condition of self-realisation. Here all roads lead to Rome. Herein, lies the cosmopolitanism of Bhārata-Dharma expressed and enunciated in Vaidika and Tantrika cults. Bhārata-Dharma is not certainly idolatory, idolatory of Geography, idolatory of petty nationalism and idolatory of symbols. Kundalinī represents, the Goddess Kali, or the Visvakalā-nātmaka power, the creative supreme conscious power. Sri Rādhā represents the fundamental primordial sex-energy, ‘Ujjala-Prakriyā Rasa’, Siva represents the absolute unmanifested macrocosmic Consciousness. The onward march of the “*Enternal Feminine*” Kāma-Kalā Vilāsa manifested in the universe out of the fulness of joy within is the ‘Maheswarī’ of Tantra and Srī Rādhā of Vaisnava Religion in eternal Union with absolute Consciousness, ‘Niskala Bramah’. When by means of ‘Kundalinī Yoga’, this state or Brahmapada is realised, the spiritual pilgrim attains the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’, ‘Goloka’ or ‘Kailāsa’, where power and consciousness remain eternally in inseparable union. This is the common goal, the realisation of all forms of Bhārat-Dharma. When Brahmapada or the state of self-realisation is attained, the spiritual pilgrim awakens from the deep caverns of self-luminous Intelligence permeating yet transcending the entire universe as the indwelling informing principle in all. He loses his particularity or individuality and attains the state of “All-consciousness”, he perceives the same Self here, there and everywhere. This is the common

goal of all forms of Bhārat-Dhārma', Vaidika or Tantrika.

He who has truly understood the sacred scriptures as a whole will certainly recognise that under varieties of forms, rituals, religious practices and degrees of spiritual attainment, the same thing has been preached by way of doctrines. The Vedas teach "Brahma-Vidyā", so also the Tantras. The Kulārṇava Tantra says that the religion of the Tantras is based on and inspired by the truths of the Vedas. Other Tantras also speak of Vaidika Vākyas as mahāvākyas. The Niruttara Tantra speaks of Tantra śhāstra as the fifth veda and Kulācāra as the fifth āsrama. Gandarva Tantra says, the Tantrika Sādhaka or disciple of Tantra must be believer in the Vedas.

If the adhyātma-dristi or spiritualism of the Upanishads and the Tantras are diametrically opposed to each other, how can they employ the same method, and hold the same view regarding their common goal? We find that the Tantrika philosophy teaches that Paramātmā or Parama-Śiva is Being-Consciousness-Bliss, "Sacchidānanda". He is the supreme Being without a second, without change without attributes. Brahma is eternal, changeless, partless, formless, self-luminous, self-conscious ultimate Reality, Sayam-yoti, (Kulārṇava-Ch. I. VI-VII). The Mahānirvana Tantra says, Brahma or the absolute Reality has two fold aspects, Para-Brahma, attributeless beyond space, beyond time, beyond limitations (Niskala) and Sabda Brahma (Saguna Sākāra). Sammohana Tantra says (Chap. I) that Kubjikā or the ultimate Mother of the Universe has two fold aspects, Indeterminate (Niskala) and

determinate (Sakala). The Kulārṇava says, 'Pāśhabandho bhavet Jīva Pāśhamuktaḥ Sadāsiva' upon which the author of the Prantoshinī citing this passage says, "Thus the identity of Jīva and Śiva is shown (Iti Śiva-Jīva-oraikyam Ukta). The Śākta Tantra preaches non-dualism, the grand word (Mahāvākya) of the Vedas. According to Mahānirvāna Tantra (Ch. 7-9-8), the aphorism 'Śarvam Khallidam Brahmah' or "all this is indeed Brahman" is the end, aim of Tantrik Kulācāra, the realisation of which the Prapan-casāra Tantra describes as the fifth or supreme stage, the Gandharva Tantra says that the spiritual aspirant must be non-dualistic. What is there in the great Rātri Sūkta of the Rig Veda to which the Śāktī Tantra does not conform? The Tantrik reverence for smṛiti and Purāṇas is clear when the Mahānirvānā and other Tantras say that they are the governing śāstras of the Treta and Dāpara ages respectively and Tantra is that of the Kaliyuga. It has already been pointed out that at the end of Dāpara and with the advent of Kaliyuga, the Tantra Śāstra and Tantra Sādhana were taught to men. The Śākta Tantra is thus non-dualism, as it proclaims that self-realisation is the Summum Bonum of life, that the self is identical with Brahma. The "Tattvamasi" is thus affirmed in the Tantra Shāstra. The prapan-casāra Tantra identifies "Hriṃ" mantra with Kundalinī and Hansah with Soham. The Kulārṇava says, "Soham̐bhavena Pujayet" i.e., one must worship the Devī by identifying Her with the self. It is evident that advaitavāda or non-dualism has been translated into action by the Tantra. Śākta Tantra claims, to be the practical application of the quintessence of Indian spiritualism. Further, the Śākta-Tantra accepts the doctrine of Karma, as the Kulārṇava Tantra

says, "Jiva or the individual can not realise the self until, he renounces the fruit of all actions". Tantra accepts the Smritis and Puranas. Most of the mantras and methods of worship have been accepted in the Tantrik Sādhana. The Tantrik spiritualism is a continuation of Vedic spiritualism with more emphasis upon its practical application. The authority of the Vedas has been upheld by Āgamas and Nigamas and there is not a single doctrine or practice which is not to be found in Bhārat Dharma as a whole. It has been said, until Vedic principle has been mastered, Kulācara or practical application of Kuladharmā is not to be performed. On account of this Kuladharmā is being called the fifth Āśrama. Here a moot point arises, there are Vedic Pandits and Brahmins who look upon Kulācara with hatred on account of the use of Kuladravya which means the use of wine, meat, fish, various kinds of vegetable foods and offering of Kulapuspa in Devi Worship. Such hatred is not only due to the ignorance of the proper performance of Vedic rites, rituals and sacrifices but also to a kind of communal ego-centric predicament in complete forgetfulness of the oneness of the self preached in the Vedas and in the Tantras. It is absurd and sacrilegious to accept the predominance of one sect upon another sect, when the śrutis declare the oneness of the self and revealed Truth.

The pancatattva ritual preached in the Tantra and authenticity and authority of the Tantrik scriptures have been challenged. It may be pointed out to the contrary that the uses of wine, meat, fish, etc. or Pancatattva is very ancient. It has already been said that the use of Pancatattva has been repeatedly prohibited in

both the Tāntrik and Vedic cults. This prohibition is applicable to those who has not understood the meaning, significance, proper application of the five principles or tattva or self-realisation. The tattvas are neither useless nor harmful by themselves. But their right use or abuse make them useful or useless, just as a medicine is useful when it cures a disease and is rightly prescribed by a physician who knows the native ingredients and application of that medicine to specific cases. The authenticity and practical usefulness of Tantra Śāstra is known by its fruit, for in the present age nothing is to be accepted as true which has no significance, no value in human life. The authority of the Śāstra is determined by the question whether Siddhi or salvation can be realised here and now. So the Indian test for any thing is actual experience in Samādhi, the beautiful vision and spiritual ecstasy which is the proof of Advaita Siddhi or self-realisation and nothing else. It is the actual experience of 'Soham' which is the quintessence of the Veda, for the Vedānta declares "Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati" i.e, to know Brahma is to be Brahma. Actual Experience of self-realisation is not metaphysical speculation about the self but really means self-awakening from the state of self obliviousness, birth of the new man out of the ashes of the old, regeneration, a transformation of the individual into the universal, the discovery of the same self here, there and everywhere and this means 'Kriyā' or action or Sādhanā and therefore the keynote of the Tantra Śhāstra is 'Kriyā' or actual practice for factual realisation. For realisation is a fact as well as an act. The Tantra declares with one voice, "Try to live in tune with nature, nature working in the macrocosm as well as in the micro-cosm in order

that parāprakṛiti or the supreme magnificent Nature comprehending the self and the world can be realised. The supreme state is not a blank negation of nature both outward and inward but fulfilled, integrated, unitary Experience where there is neither inside nor outside. It is not in a world afar that the Infinite is to be sought but here and now by the evolution of personality to its highest pitch and ultimately surrendering the same in the supreme Self. The greatest necessity of humanity in this Kaliyuga or "Iron Age" is that man must realise that he is but a tiny little spark in the inexhaustible reach of conscious energies by first surrendering and that he could share in the full reach of conscious energies only by surrendering petty illusions of saṃsāra which bind rather than liberate.

Lastly, the Vedas hold the 'Karmakānda' on the way of 'Saṃsāra' or the worldly way as well as 'Niḥśreyah' or the way of liberation from bondage to mundane values and happiness, or the Divine way. In the same strain, the Nirvāna Tantra also says, "Oh Devi, there are two ways :- the Jiva or the individual attached to the body and the senses cherishes naturally and commonly the Pravittimārga or the mortal human way of attachment to mundane, changing, fleeting values and objects. In this state conscious centres lie dormant, this is the sleeping slumbering state of the self engrossed in the human way weltering in the whirlpool of suffering. When the self awakens from the state of self-forgetfulness by breaking through the chain of illusion, there is an upward, onward march towards the supreme state of self-realisation. With the dawn of self-illumination, the dark night

of the soul vanishes. Like the Vedas, the Tantras enjoin both the ways : the human way or the way of bondage which is natural and common while the divine way or the way of self-realisation, the return way from attachment to mundane values and happiness is the most fruitful way as it leads to self-realisation. Thus the 'Karmakānda' and 'Jñankānda' or and 'Pravritti Mārga' and 'Nivritti Mārga' of the 'Tantras' and the Vedas have a beautiful parallelism.

CHAPTER—V

The Antiquity And Authenticity Of Tantra Sastra

At the outset, it may be pointed out, that Tantra, like the Vedas, is revelation, revealed to some of the great Rishis or prophets of yore. These revealed truths have been handed down to us from generation to generation. They are considered as 'Apauroseya Vākyas' that is, divine words or logos without the authorship of any mortal human being. Hence they are beyond spatial, temporal and casual configurations. Further, according to Tantra, revelation like creation is an eternally continuous process. It is a fundamental belief among the Indian people that the first revealed truth is the macrocosmic sound 'Om̐' which is at the root of the creative urge of Brahmā known as the first created Being out of the primordial will-to-create, 'Ichhāśakti' in inseparable union with 'Para Brahma' or 'Parama Śiva'. Later on, Viṣṇu, the Great Lord of preservation, for the sustenance and maintenance of the world order communicated it to the whole universe of existence through his disciples. 'Om̐', the primordial cosmic sound is celebrated in the Vedas as the great 'Praṇava'. Similarly according to Tantrik Sruti, 'Hring' is the primordial cosmic sound revealed by 'Sadāśiva'. 'Hring' is thus the great Pranavā of the

Tantras. The source of all the Vedic scriptures is the Pranava 'Om', as the matrix of all Tantrik scriptures is the Pranava, 'Hṛīṅ'. They are not the products of any human being ; hence revelation has no temporal history. They are eternal. History records temporal events, that is, events in time recorded by human beings. As the Praṇavas are not of any human authorship, they have not been manifested through the historical process. It is evident that what are called Vaidik and Tantrik scriptures are expansions, elaborations through language in the form of mantras, Āraṇyakas, Samhitās etc. at first verbally transmitted from generation to generation by the great sages of yore like Vaśista, Yajñavalka, Durvāshā and by later interpreters and Ācāryas like Sāyana, and others in respect of the Vedas and like Acārya Śhankara, Acārya Vartrihari, Acārya Abhinava Gupta in respect of the Tantrik scriptures. So we have Vaidiki Rishis and ācāryas as also Tantrik Rishis and ācāryas. It is worthy of consideration here, that some of the Rishis are common to both the Vedas and Tantras, such as, Vaśhista, Vedavyāsa, Yajñavalka, Rajarshi Janaka, Dattātreya, Debarsi Nārada, Maharshi Jāvala and many others. Similarly Ācārya Shankara, Acārya Abhinava Gupta, Acārya Vartrihari and many others are common interpreters of both the Vedas and the Tantras. These two fundamental holy scriptures of ancient India which are regarded as the twin encyclopaedia of Indian culture and which have their origin in divine revelation, in immemorial pre-historic past cannot be regarded as the product of a single day or of an individual author or of a particular geographical space. They are the products of a continuous process of evolution from divine revelation to

verbal communication and from verbal communication to linguistic expression recorded in the Vaidik and Tantrik scriptures which are events in history. So it may be said, if we want to ascertain the age of the Vedic and Tantrik scriptures respectively, we have to fall back upon certain internal and external evidences. In this regard, the Samhitās, the Āranakas, the Upanishads, the innumerable Smritis, the Purānas, the upa-purānas, are our guidance. Similarly the vast Tantrik literature comprising both the Nigamas and Āgamas are pointers to Tantrik culture which once upon a time was the predominant Śāstra of ancient India beyond 'Āryāvarta' and is still holding its sway over the whole of Indian population and culture in matters of religion, spiritualism and philosophy. It is to be noted here that Indian culture is enshrined in her religion, rooted in Brahma-Vidyā or self-realisation and in this respect India is the home, cradle, nursery, the central shrine of all religions. The first flutter of 'Life Divine' in and through the human is to be searched for in India, the heart-centre of all religions, of all cultures of the world. Historians by the analytic method may try to ascertain the dates and places of different religions of the world, the Anthropologist, the Sociologist may try to find out indirect evidences in support of their hypotheses, teachers of comparative religion by the comparative method, by the accumulation of some consistent and mostly inconsistent facts may try to find out the dates of different primitive religions of the East and West ; but its is a stubbron truth that all ancient religions have their origin in the mystic feeling of oneness of the spirit acquired by 'Aparoksha Anubhuti' or immediate, direct, definite awareness of

an eternal infinite Reality, an indwelling, informing spiritual principle in all. The multifarious religions of the world may have their territorial, racial differences but they all arise from an inward urge from within, the heart-centre of all religions which is India. 'Mānā-worship', tribal worship, ghost worship, ancestor-worship, fire worship are there in almost all forms of primitive religions, but the central principle, the cardinal essence of all religions have ever been the same and their true origin is to be found in human consciousness. They are not grafted in human nature by any impact from outside. An in-depth study of the comparative religions of the world will reveal this common feature in all religions in spite of their exoteric practices in the form of rites, rituals, racial and customary colourings. This common bond of all religions and spiritualism of the world was discovered in the solitary, peaceful hermitages of ancient India, later on communicated to the rest of the world for the moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind. The clarion call of the Vedic Rishi in the immortal Mantra :- Śrinantu Sarve amritasya Putrā'. Oh ! Thou sons of immortality, listen. This clarion call to all human beings irrespective of caste, creed, colour, nationality, of geographical and territorial boundaries certainly indicate the oneness of spirit which is at the root of all religions and which is nowhere to be found in any tribal, sectarian or national religions of the world. Out of this realisation of the unity of the spirit, the quintessence of all religions have emerged through different tribal, racial and national religions of the world and a true appreciation of all these variegated colourful religions clearly indicate the unity of God-head, the Unity of the spirit manifested in the eternal

brotherhood and sisterhood of mankind. This realisation or 'Aparoksha Anubhuti' is of Indian origin, and that is why India has been called the central shrine of all religions. India received the light of spiritual illumination, the first flutter of religious impulse in man, the light of self-conscious, self-luminous 'Intelligence' by Yoga and Tapah, by meditation on the primordial cosmic sound, the Sābitrī Gayātrī, no where to be found in any religion of the world. That is why our great poet Rabindranath sings in tune with the Vedic lore :—"In the hermitages of ancient India, we have the first flutter of 'Life Divine', and the macrocosmic primordial Sound". It is commonly believed, though with very little evidence, that the Aryans migrated to India from outside along with their language, their Vedas and their Upanishads fought out her original, aboriginal inhabitants that is the non-Aryans or the so called Pre-Aryans and thus settled permanently in the land which they called 'Āryāvarta'. There are also great scholars like Mahamahopadhyaya Ganga Nath Jhā, Pandit D. V. S. Sastri, Trivedi, Sreekantha, K. M. Munshi and others who hold the view that the Aryans did not migrate from any other land ; they were the original inhabitants of that portion of India which they called their natural home, 'Āryāvarta'. The great Encyclopaedia of India 'Amarkosha' says while stating the boundary of 'Āryāvarta' as follows :- "That portion of Indian soil lying between the Vindhya hills and the great Himalayas is known as 'Āryāvarta'. This is also known as the sacred land or 'Punya Bhūmi' of the Aryans". The discovery of Indus valley civilisation, it is said, pushed back the cultural and religious history of India beyond the Vedic age. It gives us the glimpse of a very rich culture and of a people who were mostly

inhabitants of Western and Southern India. There were also many aboriginal tribes, mostly un-civilised and barbaric in their character such as the old Kirātas, Huns, Sabaras etc. who were later on taken in and assimilated in the Aryan fold. The Mahenjodaro and Harappa civilisation and the ancient remains of the great cities are pointers to the existence of a very civilised and cultured people called the older Dravidians by the later historians. Swami Śankārānanda in his 'Vedic culture of pre-historic India' has stated that the Mahenjodaro culture is one of the greatest achievements of non-Aryans who lived in other portions of India along with the Aryans in Āryāvarta. While we do not hesitate to accept the high antiquity and distinctive feature of the Indus Valley and Harappa culture, nobody has yet been able to prove that this culture was prevedic or antivedic or pre-Aryan or non-Aryan. The interpretations offered by Sir John Marshall can hardly be accepted as final until the inscriptions, seals and materials found are satisfactorily explained. It is regrettable that many scholars have sought to bring the races from outside India. Sir Arthur Keith, a great scholar in his review of B. S. Guha's 'Racial Affinities of the people of India, (1936)' has commented the bridge which links the Pāthans of the North West and the hill tribes of Travancore is still in existence. If evolution be true, and if the 352 millions of people now in India are members of the same great branch of humanity, this ought to be the case. Yet, strange to say, all, or nearly all, who have sought to explain the differentiation of the population of India into racial types have sought the solution of the problem outside the Peninsula. They have never attempted to ascertain how far India has

bred her own races. They have proceeded on the assumption that evolution had taken place long ago and far away but not in the great anthropological paradise of India. The Cambridge History of India regarding the Dravidians has raised the pertinent question in the following words—"Is there any evidence to show whence they came to India ? (Vol. I). But could they not have evolved on the Indian Soil ?" It is therefore safer to conclude that in ancient Bhārat from times immemorial, two distinct types of culture prevailed namely the Vedic Culture which is predominantly Aryan in character and non-Vedic Culture which is called non-Aryan. In the Rig-Veda we come across the names of 7 Rivers :- (a) Satadru, (b) Bipāsa, (c) Ravi, (d) Akshini now 'Chenub', (e) Bitasta, (f) Sindhu and (g) Saraswati. It has been said that the whole region called 'Āryāvarta' was sanctified by 'Sapta Sindhu' and was the heart-centre of Vedic Culture. The Aryans built their dwelling-places by the side of these rivers. The heart of Āryāvarta has given us the Vedas, the Upanishads, their mysticism, spiritualism and perennial philosophy along with various rites, rituals, injunctions and prohibitions. Their social relations were mostly patriarchal and in their religion male Gods have predominant place. This Vedic Culture has been called "Āraṇyaka" or forest culture. This is so called, because the Vedas and Upanishads were developed in the hermitages of ancient Rishis who lived there with their families and disciples. On the other hand, there flourished a non-Vedic culture in other parts of India beyond Āryāvarta. There is marked distinctness in some important facets of life between the Aryans and Non-Aryans. The Aryans had their permanent dwelling place in

Āryāvarta. They lived pre-dominantly a pastoral and agricultural life, dwelt in small villages. The people of the Indus Valley lived a highly organised life in thickly populated cities with all that is implied by a centralised authority looking after the needs of a large population. They built up well-planned houses made of burnt bricks, opened on two or more sides with some kinds of sanitary arrangements. This culture later on assimilated within its fold most of the uncivilised aboriginals. This was an urban culture, unlike the Vedic one whose cradle and nursery were the hermitages in the forest. The civilisation of Mahenjodaro and Harappa has not come to this earth as an accident but gradually evolved from primitive aboriginal barbarism to an urban life with most of its amenities. The various seals and inscriptions so far discovered point out that their society was matriarchal. Regarding their religion we have traces left in the Icons which include divinity in the form of mother Goddess. A male God seated in Yogic posture has also been found who was regarded as 'Śiva'. Their religious cult of the mother Goddess seemed to have been inspired by the fundamental belief in the eternal feminine in the form of 'Yoni' as the source of cosmic or procreative energy as of all creation. They also worshipped a male God in the form of a phallus or 'Linga' which they called Śiva. Some Seals in the form of 'Gauripatta' have also been discovered indicating the inseparable union of 'Linga' and 'Yoni' of male and female partnership under-lying and permeating the whole universe of created beings. What is called Tāntrik culture is to be traced here. Another distinctive character of the non-Aryan culture was, as has already been pointed out, that the non-Aryan

society was remarkably matriarchal while the Vedic Society or Ārya Society was purely partriarchal. Patriarchal society was governed by blood relationship. In days of yore, when the Aryans lived within the territorial boundaries of Āryāvarta, they lived in groups. These ethnological groups were formed by and founded upon blood relationship. These ancient groups were rigid. Marriage relation was confined within the members of that particular group. This is evident from the fact that the Aryans were not divided into castes, 'Varnā-Śrama' was the social order. The Varna was determined by Guṇas or certain special hereditary characteristics. These special characteristics were mostly hereditary traits which were transmitted from generation to generation. Those within such groups could develop a sense of the super-sensuous, those who could transcend the limitations of senses and attained high intellectual capacity were called the Brahmins, Ritvikas, Hotās, Adhyāryus and Priests. Their occupation was to cater to the moral and religious needs of the Society. There was, of course, no caste system but 'Varṇāśrama', a kind of Social guild. Once these hereditary traits were developed in some members of the group, these were transmitted from generation to generation. Thus the Brahmins as a Varṇa came into existence. A Varna was thus a group of men having special hereditary traits within a social group. Even today, a Brahmin is called a Brahmin not on account of birth but on account of certain Sanskāras or purifications by mantras and Jagña for the development of the special faculty of super-sensuous Intelligence. To day Brahmins do not try to develop these faculties. The ten kinds of sanskāras have become formalities only ; yet they claim to be

Brahmins on account of heredity. This is a pointer to the fact that blood-relationship gradually came to be a determining factor in the Brahminic order of Society. A Brahmin bridegroom could only marry a bride of Brahmin group and not of any other Varna, though of course, there were cases where a Brahmin could marry a bride of exceptional virtues of other groups. So the adage says :- 'Striratnaṃ duskutaṭ api'.

This was not any hindrance to the maintenance of Varna-group but enhanced the dignity of that group. The great sage Vishwāmitra could develop Brahminic qualities and only because he had that potentiality in him, as a result of virtues accrued to him in past births and re-births and as soon as such potential power came to the focus of his self-consciousness and social-consciousness, he was promoted to the highest Varṇa-order. It is to be noted here that in Hindu pantheon, it is a fundamental belief that heredity is a highly complex factor in the development of Society. It is constituted of two elements, namely, the merits and demerits of past actions performed in previous births and rebirths as well as hereditary traits evolved in course of evolution and transmitted from generation to generation through male-female partnership. Varna-group is thus determined. Similarly the Kshatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras are not castes but are the out-come of heredity as explained above. In ancient India, the various professions were hereditary and even today we have evidences of such hereditary occupations though they are gradually waning. Thus the Vedic Society was co-hesive organic group in which Varna-groups formed essential parts of one whole.

Such a state of Society gave the people of sense of solidarity, a sense of dignity of labour and status which led to the realisation of their best self. The non-aryans who were mostly aboriginals and earlier Dravidians were of mixed blood relationship. Hence their Society had not the rigidity of Vedic Society and their society was called matriarchal. It was through the mother that the child could know his father and no wonder that in their religion mother-Godesses were predominant Deities. Any person of any Varṇa could be elevated to the rank of a Guru if he was born with the faculty of super-sensuous perception or could develop such faculty by means of Yoga and Tapah enshrined in the Āgamic scriptures. Vedic Society Gotra is determined by the name of the Rishi with whom the ancient forefathers had blood-relationship. But in the Agamic Society, it is faith in man and his intrinsic divinity not heredity that determines liberation from bondage to sufferings which is the highest Purusārtha or summum bonum of human existence. The individual may be the product of heredity namely, merits and demerits of past actions performed in previous births and rebirths but such heredity can be totally annihilated by Dikṣha or spiritual initiation which means extinction of the merits and demerits of past actions and hereditary traits and this means birth of the new man out of the ashes of the old, regeneration. Hence 'Kula' which meant heredity among the Vaidikas is not heredity, blood-relationship but Brahma itself. 'Kulang Brahma Sanātenaḥ', in this sense, the Agamic revelation and scriptures are a challenge to the Vedic Society and the Vedic lore. Hence all distinctions determined by heredity, caste, creed, sex or nationality are totally absent in Tantric revelation and

scriptures. All human beings are potentially Śiva steeped in complete self-obliviousness and the highest realisation is 'Praty-vijñā' or recognition of the same self here, there and every where by means of Jñāna-Yoga, Karma-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga to be achieved by Mantra, Tantra, Tapaḥ Jajña, Bhuta-suddhi, Prānāyama which constitute the quintessence of Agamic religion and culture. The Tantric declares, "Human beings are not machines or tools in the hands of Karma and heredity but they are potential Śivas, the transcendental self who can transcend the limitations of Karma, of heredity, of Sansāra by Yoga and Tapaḥ as enjoined in the Agamas and Nigamas, here and now and not in a world afar. Faith in man is the fundamental character of the present day society and not in caste, creed, sex, nationality or heredity, Varnas are no where to be found in the world but it has been replaced by what has come into existence a Sankara Varna. Hence in one of the Tantras Mahadevi states, 'In the Iron Age or Kali-yuga I shall remain with the fifth Varna.' This means there will be total extinction of Varṇa and Āśhrama in Kali Yuga. Hence it has been enjoined, Paśyācāra, Dakhsināchara, Vedāchara will neither exist nor be efficacious. It is 'Kulācāra' which will prevail in the 'Kali Yuga' or Iron Age and which will lead to emancipation from bondage to suffering. The Tantra declares with the clarion call "Sarvācāra-parivṛasta Kulācāra Samāśrayi".

The aryan order of society or 'Ārya Samaj' which was at one time governed by Varṇa and Āśhrama, by blood-relationship, by heredity traits and by Karma performed in previous birth and rebirths leading to diversification

of professions no longer exist. In the Iron Age, every human being within any social group or fold is cut off from all kinds of ācāras, specially the Vaidikācāras and will obtain self-realisation by complete surrender of heredity, merits and demerits of actions performed in previous births and re-births and even in the present birth to the Purushottama or Parama Śiva by Jnan-Yoga, Kriyā Yoga and Bhakti Yoga viz., the whole man's reaction upon the ultimate Reality so that the individual man or the person with limited powers may have omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. This was exemplified in the character of Vāsudeva, Sree Krishna at the juncture of Dvāpara and Kali Yuga heralding the advent of the new man, an unique regeneration by a new technique or art of self-realisation enshrined in the agamas and nigamas. Hence it has been said that Lord Krishna is the propagator, the compiler, the interpreter of the Āgamic and Nigamic Śrutis 'Mataśca Vasudevasya'. It is a note-worthy fact that the two dynasties known as the Pāndavas and Kauravas performed Tantric sacrifices, rituals and practices and were believers in Mantra, Yajña, Tapah by the performance of which deadly weapons could be developed. All of them were Śāktas whereas some of the great personalities like Bidura, Sanjaya, Rāja Parikshita etc. were Vaishnavas. The great epic Mahābharata bears evidences of Tantra Dharma prevalent among all sections of Mahāvarata and accepting the Śākta, Śaiva and Vaishnava Dharma, the three main currents of Āgamic Śrutis.

Regarding their Religion, we have traces left in the icons which include among other materials a Deity in the form of Mother-Goddess, a male God seated in Yogic

posture, a seal showing the inseparable union of Śiva and Śakti, a symbolic form of male and female partnership in creation, of the inalienable union of Parama Śiva and Paramā Śakti, Prakāśa and Vimarsa as ultimate reality enjoined in the Tantra Śāstra. It may conjectured here safely that Tantra Śāstra rooted in non-aryan Dravidian-cum-aboriginal conception of Linga and Yoni reached its highest expression in the conception of the ultimate Reality which is Śiva-Śakti-Sāmarasya. It will be highly interesting to note here that worship of the Śiva Linga is to be found not only among the Aryans and non-aryans comprising the whole of Indian population but also in the religion of Misar, Babylon, Greece which are regarded as homes of very ancient religions. The word 'Misar' is a degenerated linguistic form of the Sanskrit word 'Misra'. The tradition is that those Indians who committed very heinous crimes were transported to Misradesh. These exiled Indians gradually formed a group called Misra or Mixed population and the place where they lived came to be celebrated as Misar. There are many scholars who unanimously hold that this culture and civilisation spread from Misar to Greece and from Greece to Rome and from Rome to all other parts of the West. It is evident that the pyramid of Misar is latin version of 'piramis' an apavrangsa of the Sanskrit word 'Parameśha' which is another name of Śiva. Similarly the word Babylon is a diminutive form of the Sanskrit word 'Bhabalin' or Bhabalinga. So the phallus celebrated in Non-Aryan culture ultimately came to be regarded as Śiva. In Greece Linga worship or phallus-worship was also accepted. The phallus-worship was pompously celebrated during the worship of the Lord of all Gods Dionesia. Similarly

the Śiva of pre-Aryan or non-Aryan culture has been echoed in the Rigvedic conception of Rudra Deva who was later on transformed into Śiva, the all-benevolent supreme Lord. Acharya Sāyana in explaining the term Rudra has stated, "Rudra is the Supreme Lord who compels foes to weep, he is the Supreme Lord who liberates one from bondage to sufferings". (Atharva-Veda VII patal 92 commentary). The Rig-Veda also says that the term 'Ruṭ' means cosmic sound through which subtle knowledge is obtained "Three sūktas of the Rig Veda (I-114, II-33, VII-46) are dedicated to the worship of Rudra and which have been called "Rudra Midastuṃ" which means Rudra is the ful-filler of all desires, he is the Great Physician (Rig Veda-II-33/34)". Thus there is clear indication that in the Vedas 'Rudra' is regarded as the all-benevolent Lord. In the Aiteriya Upanishad it has been stated "Eka eva Rudra dvitiya katasthe". Rudra is one, there is no second. From all these considerations, it can be safely concluded that Rudra Devāta of the Vedic religion and Śiva of the Mahenjodaro and Harappa Culture and Linga worship of Misar, Babylon, Greece, Rome and Europe is the connecting link or bridge between Aryan and Non-Aryan people of the world. In a well known commentary on 'Brahma Sutra' (II-2/38) Srikantha declares that in his view "there is no difference between Veda and Śaivāgama, that the Vedas can also be called Saiva-gamas because śiva is their common author". The Non-Aryan aboriginals whose culture was predominantly matriarchal also worshipped Śiva. The worship of tree, fire, water were in vogue among them. Some of the Seals containing figures of animals may be regarded as symbols or carriers (Bāhana) of

Deities. They also worshipped male and female procreative organs in the form of 'Linga' and 'Yoni'. They believed in the distinct culture of their own and lived in those portions of Bhārat which were not called Āryāvarta or the land of the arya. This distinction between Non-Aryans and Aryans gives us an insight into the distinction between Veda and Tantra and into the territorial division of India between Āryāvarta and the land of the non-Aryans. It has already been pointed out that in spite of distinctness, they developed a common bond of unity in the conception of Śiva, bridge between the two cultures. The Linga worship evolved into Tantrik cult which is the cult of the Kaliyuga (Iron Age). The Aryan cult, the non-Aryan cult, later on by the process of reciprocal 'taking from and adding to, develop belief in the efficacy of Mantras and were acquainted with some kind of Yoga. They later on intermingled with the population of Mahenjodaro and Harappa. Thus a distinct and very ancient culture was brought into existence by the people who dwelt in lands beyond Āryāvarta but nevertheless were the primitive sons of Indian soil. It may be pointed out here that the term 'non-Aryans' does not mean any inferior class of people, what it connotes is a people who were not arya, who had distinct contributions to Indian cultural and spiritual heritage. This has given birth to an all-comprehensive enriched culture in the mediaeval Tantrik scriptures. Hence we find that some of the Rishis of the Vedas and Tantras are common such Vashista, Yajñavalkya, Dattātreya, Kātyana, Agastya, Durvasha and many others.

A cursory glance at the pages of the history of comparative religions of the world will reveal that out of

distinction there comes amalgamation, harmonisation, co-ordination and synthesis. This act of co-ordination, assimilation and synthesis took a long period ranging between 2000 and 1200 B. C. This has brought into existence an integrated synthetic and synoptic 'Adhyātma Drṣṭi' or 'Shiva-Drṣṭi', as it is known in Tantra. In other words Tantra Sāstra means the enrichment, expansion of knowledge by the amalgamation of aboriginal cultures which had their's origin in India and later on migrated to other parts of the world beyond India. This Bhārat Dharma or Tantra Dharma has branched out in all directions of India consisting of 3 main currents (1) Śaiva Dharma, (2) Śākta Dharma (3) Viṣṇava Dharma. This testifies not only to the high antiquity or authenticity of Tantrik Culture but also to the continuity of the spiritual progress in India. From the standpoint of Geography and History, we find that from the snow-clad Himalayan region down to Kanyā Kumari there has ever been a strenuous effort for the discovery of the hidden Truth. The heart of Āryāvarta gave us the Vedas, their rites and rituals, the earlier Upanishads, the great Epics and innumerable Purāṇas. Mithila has given us the spiritualism of Rājarshi Janaka and Maharshi Yajñi-
valkya, Bengal has given us the Śākta Tantras including Vaisnava Tantras. Assam has given us Vaisnavism of Sankardeva. Orissa has given us the quintessence of Śākta-tantra unparalleled in the history of world-religion. To Kashmir, we owe Trika philosophy and Sādhana of Śaivism. The religion of South turned the whole country into a vast Cathedral of gorgeous temples and magnificent architecture. The sacred places of pilgrimage in the Karnātaka testify to the ancient Lingayet cult. The Tamil

Saints of Vaisnavism established a heirarchy of spiritual achievements. Gujrat gave us the Bhāgabat-cult, consolidated the Solar cult, the Svetambara Jaina canon, Rajasthan, Vindyapradesa, Madhyapradesa, the Southern part of Bihar, we have remnants of an archaic religious beliefs whose source we are constantly trying to search out from fragmentary materials belonging to the pre-historic Mahenjadaro-Harappa Culture, whose actual date can not be deciphered. We can, however, find out a common bond of unity, a common Ideal of spiritualism permeating the whole of India and in fact what is called India is her Religion and her spiritual attainments. There has never been any cut in the continuous process of her spritual evolution. There has been diversity of views, diversity in practices, diversity in respect of rites, rituals, ceremonies and methods of worship ; but India has never forshaken her spirit of integration, assimilation and comprehension in her quest for the eternal and the Infinite, in the disinterested pursuit of truth. This is what characterises her religion and culture. This has been achieved in the emergence of a very rich and comprehensive religious cult and spiritualism known as Tantra suited to this 'Iron Age' or Kali-Yuga, rooted in the Vedas, the Upanishadas, integrating, assimilating the past into the present evolving towards the birth of the new man out of the ashes of the old. The Rishis, the revered seers of old, addressed all human beings as the legatees of immortality, divinity and freedom (Amritsya Putra). They declared with the clarion call, "let us all participate in the grand festival of spiritualism, let us all move in truth and in spirit (Om Saha-Vīryaṃ Karavāmahe, Saha Na Bhunkte)". Later interpreters like Śankara, Ramājuja, Madhyācārya,

the individual Siddhas, the followers of Matsendranath and Gorokshyanath, their innumerable votaries, the saints of Karnāṭaka, the Tamil Saints, the Vaisnava lyricists in their ecstatic devotion to God, the Mahāraṣṭrian Saints like Tukārama, Nāmadeva, the mystics of northern India like Kavir, Dadu, Ravidas, Nānak, Mirabai and Tulsidas, the great Tantrikas of Bengal like Sarvānanda, Brahmānanda, Krishnānanda, Bhaskar Rai, Ramprasada, Ramkrishna, Bāmadeva, Mahamohapadhyay Siva Chandra Vidyarnava, etc. the great Vaisnava Acharyas like Advaittacarya, Rai Rāmānanda, Shree Chaitanya, Sree Nityānanda all have proclaimed to the world with one voice, the oneness of the spirit, the fundamental unity of spiritual outlook, the spiritual life of Indian people, its place and destiny in the world order. It is, therefore, sheer phantasy to assume and say that Aryans were an aggressive people, quarrelled with all others who did not contribute to their views, were intolerant of others' religious cults and practices. India developed her own genius not by exploiting and coercing others but in the midst of calm, serene, tranquil hermitages preaching the gospel of immortality, of divinity, of freedom for human beings declaring that true religion is all-comprehensive integrated Experience in which Vidyā and Avidyā, knowledge and illusion, truth and error, Bhukti and Mukti, enjoyment and liberation, emancipation and bondage are intrinsically and inseparably bound up as essential part of one whole. Such a synthetic, integral Experience is Tantra or 'Divya Darśana', 'Dibya-Bhava', 'Dibya-Anubhuti'. This is the esoteric meaning of Tantra. Its exoteric meaning applies to the vast mass of sacred scriptures which

embody Mantra, Tantra, Śāstra, Guru, Yoga, Puja or Worship, Upasana, Prayer, Meditation in variety of forms rituals and practices along with a non-dualistic philosophy and Sādhana. It has already been pointed out that the Tantras, Agamas and Nigamas constitute revealed truths, revealed to the super-sensuous perception of great Rishis like Agastya, Durvāsa, Duttātreyā, Parashurama, Vasiṣṭha and other seers of old. Almost in all Agamic Tantras we find the faculty of super-sensuous, self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence represented as revealer and the Kundalinī, or the unconscious 'materia-prima' represented as Prakriti as the listener-in. In the Nigamas we have the divine mother or the Kundalinī Śakti or the primordial perennial source of cosmic sounds and cosmic power awakened is the revealer of the eternal truths of Nigamas and the active participator is the great Sadā-Śiva who represents i.e., the third eye of Prajñā or Supreme Wisdom.

In the Tantras Siva or 'Giriśa' is represented as the revealer of macrocosmic sound, Divine 'logos' in the form of 'Bindu' or cosmic Consciousness Shining forth innumerable sounds and objects whose gross expressions are innumerable alphabets, in cosmic life and cosmic power. The word 'Giriśa' denotes one potential macrocosmic sound of which all other microcosmic sounds manifested through innumerable letters and alphabets convey meanings, "Girau Baci Śete Iti Giriśa". Practically the whole of the Tantrik encyclopaedic literature has been found in the form dialogues between the divine Mother or Kundalinī or macrocosmic power in man and Sadā-Śiva or the faculty of super-conscious, self-conscious,

self-luminous Intelligence. This represents the mystic union of the unconscious abysmal depth of consciousness awakened to the day-light of self conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. This is the Purusa and Prakriti or Kundalinī and Sadā-Śiva, the eternal 'Feminine' in Man and eternal 'Male' in the 'Feminine'. We are, therefore, forced to the inevitable conclusion that (1) the ancient prophets or Rishis of the Vedas were Aryans and they named their permanent place of residence as Āryāvarta, (2) to their faculty of super-sensuous perception the Vedic truths were revealed, (3) their sacred scriptures of the Vedas were not imported from outside by any non-Vedic, non-Aryan people, the Vedas had their origin in that portion of Bhārat known as 'Āryāvarta'. They were not imported from outside by any foreign people. The language of the Vedas and the Upanisads originated on Indian soil which was later on simplified in Sanskrit. No foreign language is involved here, (4) The other portions of India i.e., the region from Vindhya Hills down to Cape Comorin and North Western India were not no-man's land, (5) in these portions flourished a rich culture recently discovered as Mohenjodaro and Harappa culture and most of the inhabitants of these portions of Bhārata were early Dravidians and other aboriginals known as non-aryans, (6) between the Vedic culture and the Mohenjodaro and Harappa Culture, there is an unity of outlook and certain common characters which can not be ignored, because of the truth that 'great illumined souls think alike'. The presence of the common characters between the two cultures do not mean that one was forced upon the other, (7) On the Indian soil to very rich and ancient cultures existed and flourished side by side without entering into

patricidal quarrel. The two cultures originated in India and flourished amongst the Indian people, (8) this is evident from the fact that in those days of yore, the quintessence of their tenets were peace, goodwill, amity among all people of the earth. They were not fighting people. They were introspective and built their civilization, culture and religion in the solitude of their hermitages. The former culture may be termed as 'Forest' (Āranyaka), culture. Thus these two cultures lived side by side without interfering with each other. The age of these two cultures which flourished, side by side as distinctive parts of one whole has not yet been ascertained ; simply because some of the Vedas, Āranyakas, Brāhmanas are long extinct and the remnants of the Vedas do not conclusively enable us to come to a definite conclusion regarding the origin of the Vedic culture and religion. On the other hand, insufficient materials in the form of seals, phallus, the archeological findings of Mohenjodaro and Harappa and many inscriptions whose language and meanings have not yet been deciphered can not definitely establish the age of the pre-aryan or non-aryan culture and religion. Whatever little history we have obtained, we may conjecture that the date may be said to be 5000 or 4000 B. C. This is the most remote age whose date has not yet been historically ascertained, (9) if we cast a cursory glance at the historical evolution of different civilizations of the world and mankind in general, we find that out of separation there ever has been intermingling of cultures which without diminishing the intrinsic merit of distinct cultures and religions have sufficiently enhanced the value and glory of their fundamental tenets. The fundamental principles in all religions are eternally true, though they

may differ in exoteric practices, rites, rituals, ceremonies, methods of worship and even methods of Yoga, (10) there are ample internal and external evidences, which go to prove the inter relation, co-ordination and integration of Vedic and other cultures of India. This has enhanced the glory, and the dignity of Indian culture and religion as a whole. This social, religious, intercourse of two different cultures did not happen in a day. It was a steady, continuous movement towards an unitary integrated, all comprehensive Experience which came to be known as Brahma-Vidyā. The age of the first beginning of this process of amalgamation may be said to be the Middle age and its date may be fixed in and between 2000 and 1200 B. C. This synthesis has brought into existence a vast and massive sacred literature, known as Tantra. The Tantras form the encyclopaedia of Indian Culture and wisdom. Philosophy, Art, Science, Medicine, Ethics, Sociology, Chemistry, Astrology, Astronomy have been discussed profusely with great insight in the Tantras. In the Śakti-Mangala Tantra, it is said that the whole of India was divided into three distinct regions according to the classification of the Tantras. The region from Vindhyas upto Chittagong forms Vishnukrānta or ancient Gourdesh, from Vindhyāchala down to Cape Comorin, the whole region was known, Asvakraṇta or modern Deccan, and the region lying between Vindhyāchala, Nepal, Afghanistan and the portion of North West India was known as Rathakraṇta. Sixty Four Tantras formed the governing sacred scriptures of each region ; so as many as hundred ninetytwo Tantras governed the whole of Indian culture and religion, (11) later on Tantra branched out in three directions—the Śaiva Tantra, the Śākta

Tantra and the Vaisnava Tantra as products of the mediaeval synthetic process. This has been the most fruitful period in the history of the Tantras. Most of the important standard works in the Āgamas and Nigamas, the innumerable treaties and rich commentaries are the products of this period, (12) all these are pointers to the fact that Indian cultural heritage is not only the most ancient but also most extensive and varied. Many races and people, many civilisations, many cultural units have contributed their mite in evolving a distinctive, synthetic, integrated view. The fundamental ideal of modern India is to develop a comprehensive, synthesised, unified, reconciled, synoptic world-view leading to the regeneration of man. India represents a remarkable diversity of religious views out of which a synthetic unity is developing pointing out the true destiny of man viz., Divinity, Immortality and Freedom. This is faith which has to be worked out in every sphere of our activity, social, economical, political and cultural. The Tantra Śāstra is fundamentally Sāadhan-Śāstra which has laid down the ways and means of the art of practical self-realisation, the establishment of Brahma Vidyā by means of spiritual practices or Sādhnā. Equality of man is not a matter of expediency, a game of social and political reformers, but it strikes the keynote of Indian Culture and religion, a practical art of life which leads to the discovery of the same self here, there and everywhere. This Indian cultural evolution in Tantra preaches not a kind of equality to be established by negation or by some artificial, mechanical adjustment. It is to be found in the realisation of Śiva, in the awakening of the individual self plunged in utter self-obliviousness to its reconnection as

the self-conscious, self-luminous 'Intelligence' which is the Śiva in Man. This is Advaitam, the truth of perfect equality, perfect divinity, perfect immortality and freedom. "Brahmanistha Grihasta Syāt Tattvajñāna Parāyanḥ Yaṭ Yaṭ Karma Prakurvīta Taṭ Brahmani Samarpayeṭ". (Iti Agama). The Ideal, the Summum Bonum of life is to be attained by those who live domestic life, aspiring for Brahma Vidyā or self-realisation and who surrender all their activities and the fruits thereof to the ultimate Reality or the Self.

The Aryans were, no doubt, very culturally elevated people as also the people of Mohenjodaro and Harappa civilisation. There were also other aboriginal tribes who later on were aryanised and assimilated into the Aryan fold. Religion, in India has ever been an unifying, integrating, healing and cementing principle in society and never an alien disintegrating force. 'It is Religion earth's central shrine, India is Religion' (Grab). The separation of Aryans and non-Aryans is an assumption and this has ended in disrupting the fundamental oneness of its people. The oneness of its people, inspite of the diversity of races, exoteric practices, rites and rituals, is conspicuously evident in their sacred scriptures, viz., the Vedas and the Tantras whose authenticity and authority is universally acknowledged. Separation of Aryans and Non-Aryans has culminated in the creation of various castes, creeds and sects dividing the nation into separate water-tight compartments, quarrelling against one another on grounds of pettifoggerism, sectarianism, casteism fanaticism etc. on the one hand, and in the artificial creation of religious and cultural groups

or sects trying to jeopardise the unity of the Bhārata people, the oneness of the spirit, the 'Advaita Dristi' of Indian Cultural outlook. All this, is the result of the unhistorical assumption of primitive quarrel between Aryans and non-Aryans. It should be noted here, particularly, that there might have been some aboriginal people here in India but they were organised gradually and welcomed into the fold of the Bhārat people. It is a fact of history that aryanisation is essentially a cultural and spiritual process absorbing and integrating new communities of men, tribes and races into the fold of Vedic and Tāntrik religions. Of course, it is very difficult to give a correct history of this process of aryanisation from the Vedic age to this present age or Kaliyuga, simply because of the fact that most of the Vedas, the Āranyakas the Upanisadas and Brahmanas have been victims of 'Time's Tyrannic Claim'. Similarly most of the Tantras are now extinct, on account of hatred, ignorance and apathy on the part of those who did not like them. But our holy scriptures still preserve a correct history of aryanisation by pointing out four distinct stages in the historical process of Aryanisation into (a) Satya, (b) Treta, (c) Dvāpara and (d) Kaliyuga. In the Satya Yuga, the Vedic Karmakānda and Jñānakanda were strictly followed. It is always to the Jñānakanda and its votaries that Vedic religion and tradition owed its wonderful expansion and progress. Their spirit of self-sacrifice, broad mindedness, spirit of toleration, their authority accepted by the Vedic Society in all spheres of its activities created a sense of solidarity among the people. In course of time, Vedic religion which developed rigid asceticism and austerities, gradually failed to inspire the people and gave place to the

'Treta Yuga' which, of course, carried the Vedic tradition in the form of innumerable smritis. These scriptures are authoritative, simply because they are based on the authority of the Vedas and accept them as the highest Pramāna or proof. They contain various injunctions, prohibitions, rules and regulations, laws of marriage, succession etc., in fact all those regulations which governed the life of Indian Society. The rigidity of these rules and prohibitions failed gradually with the emergence of a new spirit of freedom among the people. With the passing away of the 'Tretā Yuga' along with the intellectual regeneration of the people in general, came the age of Purānas or the Dvāpara age. The innumerable Purānas carried the Vedic lore in the form of multifarious parables, allegories, historical, semi-historical stories, rites and rituals with a view to cater to the changing intellectual capacities and emotional responses of the people. It is a fact of history that on Indian soil, rites and rituals have changed due to changing circumstances and adaptability of the people, but the inner essence of spiritualism has ever prevailed which is the non dualistic or Advaita view of life, for rites and rituals refer to the application of a principle. A principle may be perfectly right, true, and yet its application may depend upon the mental capability and adaptability of the applicant. Hence Hindu rites and rituals have changed but the fundamental principle of Non-dualism has survived against the onslaught of time. This has enabled the people to call themselves Bhāratavāsī or sons of Bhārat and their religion Bhāratdharma. After the battle of Kurukshetra, a new age, viz., the Kali Yuga dawned with the onrush of hordes of men all over India such

as Sakas, Hunas, Turks etc. who were essentially foreigners, and barbaric in their character. Thus the greatest problem of the beginning of the Kali Yuga was how the process of aryanisation of the new India that was gradually rising, surging furiously from every side, against the old Vedic orthodoxy which was struggling hard to survive, was to be kept alive by social enactments, injunctions and prohibitions to guard its hazardous insularity. The Vedic rites and rituals together with its Karmakāṇḍa, in course of time, began to be neglected and forgotten on account of excessive emphasis upon the Jñānakāṇḍa of the Upanisadas. There had been undoubtedly a disruption in the continuity of the Vedic rites, rituals and sacrifices due to the teaching of some of the over-zealous advocates of the Upanisadic Philosophy of Non-dualism. Thus an artificial barrier between the Vedic Karmakāṇḍa and Jñānakāṇḍa was created which could not be bridged over. The synthetic integrated view of life in the Vedas and the Upanisadas began to be forgotten. Bhāratdharma grew to be merely introspective and philosophical at the cost of objective view of life. 'Na Vedāḥ Na Yajña Na Tapovih Ugrai' self realisation could be realised. Too much emphasis upon intellectual comprehension and philosophical understanding culminated in generating a spirit of antagonism against the performance of Vedic rites and rituals which were openly declared to be fruitless. Thus the process of "Aryanisation" suffered a set back at the hands of some philosophers. The Upanisadic non-dualistic philosophy could not cater to the moral and spiritual aspirations of the majority of Indian people who had neither the high intellectual equipment, nor keen insight to penetrate

deeper into the abysmal depth of Reality by metaphysical speculation. Thus there arose a perpetual quarrel between the Mimāṃsakas upholding the Karma-kāṇḍa and the philosophers advocating an abstract monistic doctrine of life. Over and above all these, some of the interpreters of the Upanisadas began to teach that the Vedic doctrines and practices would be useless in the changed circumstances and environment of the Kali Yuga, when men would be deeply engrossed in mundane values completely oblivious of the intrinsic divinity, freedom and immortality of the Self. Thus the fluidity and continuity of Bhārata Dharma was arrested for the time being. But Indian religion could not be confined within the prison-house of the Vedas and the Upanisadas. Our seers of old had the penetrating insight, foresight and far-sight to develop a distinct class of sacred scriptures known as the Tantrik Śruti, as it has been said 'Dividā Kirtitā Srutiḥ, Vaidiki Tantriki Caiva'. The Vedic culture gradually yielded place to the Tantric culture. Hence the injunction was 'Kalau Agama Sammataḥ'. In the Kali Yuga the Agamik Śruti would prevail replacing the Vedic Śruti which, in course of time spread over to the whole of India. It should be specially noted here that it is sheer nonsense to regard Bhārata Dharma as Hinduism, Śāktaism, Śaivism or Vaisnavism. Bhārat-dharma has never been confined to a particular geographical place, particular creed or a particular form of religious practice. It had its origin in the Vedas and gradually branched out in several directions in three main currents namely Śāktaism, Śaivism and Vaisnavism. These three currents have their root in 'Āgama' and 'Nigama' which are celebrated as revealed scriptures. The Vedas constitute the foremost revelation whose authority prevailed in the

‘Satya’, ‘Treta’ and ‘Dwapara’ eras. In the Kali Yuga the whole face of the social, geographical, cultural and religious environment has undergone a complete change. The Political relations, the social relations, the economical relations, the family relations, the moral relations have completely altered and in this new set up, the old Vedic tradition has failed to inspire the people any more in their onward march for realising their best self. It is a cruel fact, stubborn fact of history which can not be denied. So the seers of old, ‘Trikalajña’ Rishi had the farsight, foresight and insight to keep in the store of their infinite treasure-house of spiritual wisdom, distinct a kind of revealed truths for the liberation of the self-oblivious suffering humanity weltering in the whirlpool of life. It will, however, be wrong to say that Vaidik Śruti and the Tantrik Śruti are completely different having no relation to each other. In fact revelation is an eternally continuous process ; for it is divine grace which is being continuously showered upon the earth below for the sustenance of the world order. If we hold the view that revelation took place at some particular point of historical time and in some geographical place, then eternality and universality of the Vedas is denied, ‘Revelation’ becomes a temporal event and the Pranava, ‘Om’, the quintessence of the Vedas a mere temporal event and that which is temporal is finite. It signifies nothing but finitude, change and limitation. Further according to both the Śrutis, the universe is an Idea in the cosmic Mind of Brahma and includes all forms of knowledge. Thus it is eternal, arising as the great and grand Idea in the ‘Cosmic Mind’. This is the ‘Veda Murti’ Brahmā. Veda, in the secondary sense, indicates the various revelations relating to Tattva,

Brahma or God, Dharma, immortality etc. to several seers of old or Risis at several times and in several places of Bhārat which are embodied in the four Vedas viz., Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva. It has already been said that revelation is a continuous process. It never ceases ; when and whenever there is a prophet illumined with the faculty of supersensuous perception there has been a revelation and in this sense 'Tantra' which constitutes the Srutis of the Kaliyuga is revelation. The Sabda-Brahma-murti has been called 'Nigamādi Śāstramārga'. Hence it has been said that Tantra Śāstra is Mantra Śāstra. It constitutes the garland of letters or microcosmic sounds revealing macrocosmic sound or Sabda-Brahma both within and without. It has been said that Āgamas the supreme self of that murti or form of cosmic Ideation, are the four Vedas with their angas or branches forming its Jivātma, the six philosophies are the six indriyas or organs of knowledge, the Purānas and Upapuranas are its body comprising its hands and all other limbs and all other śāstras or scriptures are the hairs of its whole body. In the heart lotus or 'Anāhata Cakra' are the fifty microcosmic sounds, 'Tejomayee Matrikā', revealing the cosmic sound. Thus it is evident that the Vaidic and Tantrik revelations form a continuity which have neither beginning nor end, as creation is a continuous process without beginning or end. There is change and in the changed environment and circumstances the fruitful and appropriate Śrutis are revelations of the Āgama, 'Kalau Āgamah Sammataḥ'. All this certainly exhibits the insight, foresight and farsight of the seers of old who prescribed distinct kinds of revelations for changed society. The present age is characterised by verification and experiment.

Mere faith will not do. Faith must be verified by experience. Truth must be experienced on the anvil of actual enlightenment. Truth is not truth because somebody has said it, truth is truth because it is personal experience because it has working value for the material, moral and spiritual aspirations of human life surging forward with a longing for freedom, for immortality, for divinity, for peace, for all-round well-being of human society. All this is pointer to the fact that distinct Śāstras, distinct Śrutis have been revealed in the continuous unrolling, unfolding process of Bhārat Dharma to meet and suit distinct changed circumstances, changed environment and changed conditions. The Tantras are, therefore, neither antagonistic to the Vedas, nor irrelevant, irrational Śāstras. It is not a petty Sastra of no account. From the historical point of view alone, it is worthy of our study as an important part of Indian Culture over and above its intrinsic merit. It is the storehouse of Indian spiritualism which is at once an act as well as a fact, a problem as well as a possession. This spiritual vision, supersensuous perception is to be developed by Śādhana or spiritual practices. It is not what we speculate about but what we are, which counts. The fundamental question of the present age is, how to realise this 'Brahma-Jñāna' or supreme wisdom embodied in the Vedas and the Tantras. It does not matter how much we know about the Self, God or Brahma from the sacred scriptures. It matters much to know, 'how to act out and realise the truths embodied in them.' What the intellectual world wants today is the sort of Philosophy which not merely argues but works in life. The Tantras are practical 'Śādhan Śāstras', or 'Art of Self-realisation.' Hence it has been enjoined that

the only 'Sādhana Śāstra' of the 'Kaliyuga' is Tantra or Agamaḥ.

The controversy whether the Tantras are non-Vedic in character or whether Vedas are non-Tantric in character is yet a moot problem which has created headache amongst many scholars. Such headache, undoubtedly, is the outcome of exclusive emphasis and specialisation. Specialisation means selection of what serves specific purpose for the time being and rejection of what does not suit and serve our purpose. This leads to over-emphasis of one at the expense of the other. Such a state of mind can not, however, attain an all-comprehensive, integrated, unitary, Experience which is the Supreme Ideal of the Vedas as well as of the Tantras. The inter-connection and inter-relation between the two cults can be denied only by disrupting Bhārat Dharma into two quarrelling factions which Bhārat Dharma is not. In the Atharva Veda and even in the Rig Veda we have similarities of rites and rituals of Kundalinī Yoga and some other forms of Yoga. The 'Kulārṇava' Tantra states lines at the outset, now the Devi says, 'It is the Atharva Saṅghitā'. Such an introduction of the work clearly points out the interrelation between Atharva Veda and Tantra. The Rudra Yāmala (Chap. XVII) calls, Mahadevi, 'Atharva Veda Sākshini', the silent spectator of the Atharva Veda. The 'Yantra Cintamani' of Damodara (a manuscript in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishada-Bithika II) contains the quintessence of the Atharva Veda. The origin of the 'Pancarātra' system of Vaisnava Tantra is traced to the Vaidiki School called 'Prajñāna Sākhā' (Kalpataruparimala under Brahma Sutra II, 2042). The

Kulārṇava Tantra admits that Kula-Śāstra is Vedic in spirit. Commentary of Natanānanda-Natha on the 'Kāmakaḷavilasa', a highly esteemed Tantric scripture, has affirmed inter connection between Tantric and Vedic Mantras. The practice of worshipping the symbolical Diagrams viz., Yantra, Cakra, Mudrās which are exclusively Tantric property, is to be found in the 'Taittiriya, Brahmana, Āranyaka' (Government Oriental Library Series Edition, Mysore, P. 100-109). The Taittiriya Ārannaka-IV-27, mentions a distinct Tantric charm which according to Sāyana Acharya pertains to Abhicāra-Kriya of Tantra. There are multifarious Vedic rites in which the use of liquor for sacrificial purposes, animal-sacrifice like those of horse, bulls, goat the worship of female Deities, specially of 'Aditi' and 'Ratri Devi', traces of Satkarmas which are distinctly Tantric practices go to prove the inter-relation between the two. It has already been pointed out that from days immemorial there are ample evidences supporting the antiquity and authority of Vedic and Tantric cults. The mediaeval age which may be dated between 2000-1200 B. C. has been the most fruitful age of the amalgamation of the two distinct cults enhanced the glory of Indian spiritualism and religion. The Brahminic worship, all through, is permeated by Tantricism, the Puja Mantra, the Nyasas, the Bhutasuddhi Mantras which are essentially Tantric properties are to be found in all forms of of Brahminic worship of the present day. Even the Tantric Gayatri Mantra of the Brahmin, Śāktas, Śaivas, Vaishnavas, the Śauras, the Gānapatyas are considered to be more important for Vedic worshippers than his Vedic Gayatri. The Tantric Sandhyā and Vaidik Sandhyā

are supplementary to each other. There are some scholars who are of opinion that the Tantras are Smrities and they are supplementary to the Jñanakanda of Upanisads. This is true of those Tantras which are the products of the Pauranika age. It is, therefore, evident that whatever may be the origin of the Tantras, it is an established fact now, that it has occupied a position of supreme importance in Indian religion and spiritualism of the Bharat people of all sects all over India. A cursory glance at the evolution of Indian spiritualism from Vedic age or Satya-Yuga, Treta-Yuga, the age of the Smrities, the Dvapara-Yuga or the age of the Puranas and Kali-Yuga the Iron age, we find a rich and beautiful amalgamation and rich inter-connection between the Veda, the Tantra, the Smrities and the Puranas which comprise all that we call Bharata and Bharatya Culture from straw to the gold. Professor Winternitz in his famous book 'Die Tantras, die Religion, die Saktas' has aptly remarked "From the point of view of the history of religion they are already important, for the reason that they have strongly influenced Mahājana Buddhism and specially the Buddhism of Tibet." The Tantras are the culmination of the whole of Indian culture, its spiritualism, its philosophy. Into them flow both the vedic and popular cults. Tantricism has by its own intrinsic power and dynamism imposed itself on the whole of Indian mentality.

CHAPTER—VI

The Meaning of “S’akti” or Power in Tantra

We live, move and have our being in a world which has scientific, moral and spiritual foundation. The scientific attitude, our moral aspirations and spiritual longings, if they are not to be easily discarded as fruitless efforts or fancies, are pointers to the fact that they have their meaning and significance in our inward nature as rational, moral and spiritual beings. Matter, Life, Mind, everything which comprises the Universe, are centres of force, power or energy. Lord Balfour has aptly remarked, “We know too much of matter to be any longer materialist,” “Physicists” says Prof. Eddington, one of the outstanding modern scientists, “has chased the solid substance called matter, from the atom to the electron and from there they have lost it”. Now, if matter in the sense of material substance is eliminated from the world, Spiritual existence is the only kind or model of reality which is left. “The concepts of science, philosophy are symbolic frameworks and the world which they have constructed are mental constructions and mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience. The world of science, therefore, consists of symbols and of shadows. The world of sense is the result of the constructive activity of the mind operating upon the world of symbols and

and shadows". (The nature of the physical world-Eddington). The table which seems to be out there, is to the scientist, a table of atoms and electrons. Hence, colour, shape, texture, in fact all primary and secondary qualities, have been put there by ourselves. The more thoroughly we explore it, the more obviously we recognise our own handiwork or 'mind work'. Sir Eddington goes on to say, "where science has progressed, the mind has but regained from nature that which the mind has put into nature". Sir James Jeans in his "Mysterious Universe", corroborates what is essentially the same view. The inevitable conclusion regarding the so called objective world that may be drawn is that the reality underlying the scientists' sense-data and symbols implicate consciousness. When we affirm the world of objective facts, consciousness is affirmed. That the world is the expression of power or 'Śakti' is not denied by the Scientists and that power or 'Śakti' is self-luminous, self-conscious power and the foundation, the under-lying principle of sense-data and scientist's symbols. But, by an irony or fate, the very being of consciousness as power at work has been challenged by prejudice and materialistic contention. The following quotation from an interview between Einstein and Maxphlank is not without interest in this connection. In answer to the question, "Do you think that consciousness can be explained in terms of matter and how?" Einstein answered that he did not "Consciousness", he continued, "I regard as fundamental, I regard matter as derivative from consciousness, we cannot get behind consciousness." Everything that we regard as existing postulates consciousness. The above view of the modern scientists is based upon the belief that there

is a way of knowing which though not opposed to sense-experience is yet super-empirical and other than intellectual apprehension. While sense-experience and intellectual apprehension, if correctly followed, will certainly exhibit their limitations, in apprehending Reality as it is in itself. Where sense-perception fails, supersensuous perception leads to the discovery of one fundamental Reality. This is a vision which is one whole and in which all partial experiences are parts in the one whole. The whole or the "Integral Experience" is not a whole of parts, but all parts are in the whole, in their subtlest forms or in utter potentiality. This 'Integral Experience' or the 'whole-experience' which is called super-sensuous perception or "Yogaja Pratyaksha" or intuitive illumination is immediate, direct, definite and intensely clear and this can be achieved neither by the empirical or experimental method of Science nor by common sense of the man in the street. The faculty of super-sensuous perception is to be developed by Yoga and Tapas, yet unknown to the western mind. The scientific objects and symbols can not reveal the true nature of Reality, for the whole-Experience is the revelation of the self as conscious power to itself. It is the discovery of the same self, here, there and everywhere. This is the characteristic of "where science is going today". It is evident that to Prof. Eddington, Einstein and other representatives of contemporary Science, Reality does not consist of atoms and electrons, and that the ultimate nature of Reality is spiritual in character. Atoms and electrons, can not explain consciousness without which they could not be discovered. It is the consciousness, i.e., the conscious-self which has discovered them. The implication

of modern Science after all, is that the world of mere atoms, electrons, of mechanical causation would not only be meaningless but also absurd without the conscious-self. "The footsteps on the sands of time turn out to be our own." For without a conscious mind the mental picture of the world which the physicist has constructed would have been an impossible task, without the Scientist, Science is meaningless and absurd affair. Further when the scientist speaks of atoms and electrons, or mechanical causation he is speaking of power or force or Śakti which is not only self-luminous but also self-conscious i.e., the concrete dynamic spiritual principle called the Self.

Power or energy is used in modern Science as a Summum genus term which has been loosely defined or described. In Tantra Śāstra, the word "Śakti" has a wider connotation. Śakti or power is commonly conceived as an effect, it must have a cause, and cause means productive activity. "Power" or "Śakti" has no cause, it is the first cause "Ādyā", causa sui. Similarly it can have no end, for that would simply be power in its potentiality. "Whatever exists in any form whether substance, quality, attribute, relations are rooted in thine supreme power. Oh ! Almighty Mother, the Matrix of all" (Sri Sri Chandi).

If the world of atoms and electrons, of centres of force or power are effects, they must have a cause and that cause must be power whether manifested or unmanifested, whether latent or potent. Now the question arises, 'what is the nature of this power or Śakti whose manifestation is the

world of atoms and electrons' ? Modern Physics doing away with the age-old materialistic and mechanistic conception of the universe has affirmed that where Science is going today is the spiritual world, the mysterious Universe which lies at the extreme border-land of Science. One of the dilemmas of modern philosophy is that if the world is not material, it must be mental. Such a hypothesis has brought into existence the quarrel between Realism and Idealism in all its varieties without any definite conclusion. Modern physics while analysing the nature of the physical Universe seems to arrive at the conclusion that the physical universe, if not a mental construction, is founded upon some kind of mind-stuff which can not be eliminated from the universe of things. If the world of physical objects exists, conscious-power is the foundation without which it would be meaningless and irrelevant.

In modern Psychology, the question has been raised, 'what is consciousness' ? At the outset, it may be pointed out, that it is not feeling, nor is willing, nor it is thinking ; for thinking, feeling and willing are states of consciousness. There has been a tendency in modern Psychology to identify 'States of consciousness' with consciousness of states. If we do so, we are confronted with the question, "Can we deny a subject and proceed to analyse, compare, classify and arrange these states and find out their laws ?" This has been done in modern Psychology. But the inevitable fact remains that while explaining the states of consciousness, we are face to face with a unique kind of reality, namely, the self which seems at the same time to be the knower and the known,

the actor and the spectator, a show and the spectator for whom the show is. In other words, the Conscious subject or self, which is not a subjective mental state and process or sum total of these states and processes is eternally present as the indwelling, informing principle of these states. Cognition presupposes unity of the subject. The feeling of pleasure or pain presupposes a central point into relation with which the changing states and processes happen and find their meaning. Similarly, it may be shown that all conative activity, all volitions presuppose the unity of the subject. It is the "I" who thinks, feels and not thinking, feeling and willing. Thus from every point of view as we look at the living, moving, thinking, willing, concrete world of human beings, we are presented with the fact of a unitary consciousness, of a real self, capable of real experience. Further the conscious self is the indispensable condition of all mental life, without it there is no mental life. A psychical fact is simply a fact in the conscious self and it is nothing else. From this, it follows that if we want to build up a real Psychology, the conscious self must be regarded as a summum genus term, the ultimate basis of our physical and mental existence, and like all ultimates it is indefinable. We must simply accept it as the condition of the explanation of everything else of the universe. It may not be identified with the bundle of mental states and processes any more than we can identify a real whole with the sum of its parts; in that case it would be divisible and destructible and thus nothing but finite, ever changing states and processes. It is not a state, not a faculty in addition to other faculties. It is implied in all the states and faculties of the mind. Thus the conscious self can not be deduced from

anything else whether from psychical states or from the play of unconscious forces, 'latent mental modifications', "unconscious cerebrations". 'The sub-conscious self', is now-a-days, a well accredited psychological entity and we believe, says William James, "That in it we have exactly the mediating term required, apart from all religious considerations, there is actually and literally more life in our total soul than we are anytime aware of". (Varieties of religious experience page 233). According to the modern experimental psychology besides the surface of consciousness, there is a lower region which possesses a strange miraculous magnetic power by which the contents of the lower regions are, as it were, drawn upwards and brought to the surface of consciousness. This lower region or the sub-conscious region is a store-house of experiences that are latent, yet make up the human life. The door of the treasure-house is locked, so far as the conscious personality is concerned, and yet, in some peculiar way, these latent sub-conscious or unconscious forces from the subliminal depth wake up, as it were, to the upper surface of consciousness. "It appears to be the function of the 'sub-conscious' or 'unconscious' to feed the conscious". There is that continued movement from below upward, its never-ending stream of memory and ideas keeps emerging from within. These sub-conscious activities in the depth of our conscious life are subtler, intenser, far-reaching, more penetrating and more illuminating. When it is said here that the function of the unconscious is to feed the conscious, it is not meant that the unconscious is more important than the conscious and without the "Unconscious", consciousness would be starved into death. What is meant here is the continuity

of consciousness, the ever-abiding consciousness which has supplied all the materials to the treasure-house of the "Sub-conscious" or the "unconscious". The basis of certainty lies in Consciousness, its affirmation, its intuition as the foundation on which we build up our mental life. Thus we come to the conclusion no state of consciousness can be without a conscious self who is conscious of his own states. Further, to be conscious of myself as a person is to be conscious of the existence of other persons and the world of objects, for if there is no outward, there is no inward life. For the outward or the objective world of persons and objects are but the self-expression, self-projection of the same self here, there and everywhere. Just as a spider weaves its own cob-web from within itself and thus is entangled in its own creation, similarly Śiva who is the pure light of consciousness or the self-luminous, self-conscious, "Intelligence", constructs the world of ideas and forms and then projects the same into the world of names and forms and remains confined to the prison-house of Saṃsāra created by His own intrinsic, irresistible free will. The bondage which is self-created is the state of self-obliviousness from which the self is to awaken to the daylight of consciousness. The inevitable conclusion to which we have been drawn is that according to the philosophy of Tantra, consciousness is not a barren abstraction nor a sum total of mental states and processes nor the mind but it is the self, ultimate Reality which permeates the subjective world of mental states and processes as well as the objective world of atoms and electrons and all other cosmic forces. It is the self-certifying principle not dependent upon anything else. It is not only self-luminous but also self-conscious "Intelligence".

In the above context, the philosophy of Tantra Śāstra is not only more illuminating but also more constructive. The subject and the object, the self and the world, the knower and the known, the enjoyer and the enjoyed are polarised manifestations of self-conscious, self-luminous conscious power. The two poles are two in one, they are poles in the whole, they have no separate independent existence of their own. In relation to the spiritual pilgrim or "Sādhaka" it is "Integral Experience", Pratyavijñā in which the self-conscious, self-luminous "Intelligence" recognizes itself or discovers itself by uncovering the veil of nescience as the same self here, there and everywhere, as the foundation of all, as the in-dwelling, informing spiritual principle in all. In the ultimate stage of self-realisation, it is self-recognition, pure and simple without any reference to anything inside or outside of itself. The self is discovered or recognised in its pristine glory. Thus in the Supreme "Integral Experience" the self or Brahma or Śiva illumines Himself as an "Integral whole" in which the self remains in ever-abiding, inseparable union with power. In other words the Vimarsa Śakti which is 'Ciṭ Śakti and Māya Śakti' collectively, in its subtlest potentiality or subtlest tendency of shinning forth into the world of names and forms remains identified with "Prakāśa" or pure Absolute Consciousness. This is the non-dualism of Saiva-Śākta philosophy. Here the self or Parameswara which is Ciṭ Swarupa or pure Light of Consciousness is all so Ciṭrupinī, that is conscious power. It is not only self-luminous like the Sun but also self-conscious. In this sense, it is conscious of its own intrinsic dynamic power in its potentiality as a stress in shinning forth in fact section

when the self recognises its relation to its own ideation or conceiving the Universe which is its own conception not yet manifested out there. It is in its Visvotīrna or transcendental state variously called, Paramaśiva, Paramātmā or Brahma. In this state Prakāśa and Vimarsa, the Absolute Reality and its own intrinsic potentiality to shine forth remains as one whole. Thus it is said that the “Aham” or the “I” and the “Idam” or the Universe without being utterly annihilated in the Supreme stage abides in inseparable, indistinguishable union with one another. The Citrupinī is the pure and simple unmanifested potential universe and therefore is the same with Parama Śiva. But this potentiality is eternally kinetic, i.e., it is a stress, a dynamic moment in Eternity whose manifestation is the Universe. This manifestation of Cit in its own universe, own “Idam” or ‘this’ is effected by the self’s own limiting power known as Māyā Śakti. The Universe therefore, is the self-veiling itself and this veiling principle is the self’s own Māyā Śakti. Hence Śakti has been called in Tantra Śāstra as negative power of the Absolute who is Saṭ-Svarupa or Absolutely positive. “Nisedha Vyāpararūpā Śaktiḥ.” In other words, the omnipotent all pervading, self-conscious “Intelligence” assumes finite names and forms by His own self-veiling, self-limiting Māyā Śakti, without which there would be neither persons nor objects leading to nihilistic view opposed to the supreme values of life, viz., Immortality, Divinity and Freedom, which mankind has ever cherished. The Absolute or Citrupini evolves from within Her womb, the objective order to cater to the sustenance and progressive self-realisation in the heirarchy of the evolutionary process of “Life Divine” or ‘Sivattva’.

This self-limiting power of the Absolute is nothing but Divine grace, 'Anugraha-Śakti' of Paramesvara. The Supreme Lord Parama-Śiva so loved mankind that He, by His own intrinsic irresistible free will 'Ichcha Śakti' abnegated Himself, limited Himself out of his own free-will into the world of persons and objects in order that divine play may be enacted and that man may realise the oneness of the self. When this enlightenment is achieved, there is a greeting of spirits, the gulf between man and man and between man and nature is bridged over and peace, good will, harmony is established. Thus the Māya Śakti or the self-limiting power of the self is not altogether Māyā Śakti or illusion, a negation of all that is real, but the eternal, free, unrestricted "Divine Grace" in human nature and external nature manifested as all prevading "Divine Love" to be realised not without effort and perseverance, without trials and tribulations, without aching hands and bleeding feet. For self-recognition, self-realisation is an achievement, a discovery of the self in utter self-obliviousness, and its own awakening to the daylight of self-luminous, self-conscious Intelligence. The conclusion to which recent researches in physics and psychology leads in trying to explain the nature of the physical universe and the nature and place of mind in the physical Universe, is that self-conscious power is the sole seed, the potentiality, the 'All-Foundation' of all. The ultimate Reality is "Samvit," 'Caitanya' or 'Cit' or self conscious power. It is to be noted here that by the term, self-conscious-power we do not understand anything particular having direction and form, the evolved products in the process of evolution, a mere function of experience or a mere epiphenomenon. It is the first cause "Ādyāśakti", the transcendent

and immanent spiritual principle permeating all and yet transcending all. It is not waking, dreaming nor profound dreamless sleep which are all states in consciousness but *Cit* or self-conscious power ; it is the ever-abiding spiritual principle which remains one and the same through all. It contains within itself the germ and potency of all that evolves, matter, life and mind. Conscious-power is the integral constituent of all existence. That which we call inorganic matter is nothing but veiled consciousness and though veiled yet endowed with the capacity of responding to physical and chemical stimuli such as light, temperature, sound, electricity, magnetism and the action of chemicals etc. All this means consciousness-power is involved in it, it is consciousness veiled by its own 'Māyā-Śakti'. In the higher species of the vegetable world, the manifestation of conscious power is highly instructive and interesting, such as turning of the flower to the sun, its sensitiveness to the temperature, to the wind. There are sensitive insectivorous plants such as the Sundew, the Venus fly-trap and others which remarkably exhibit conscious-power in its lowest degree. Then there is the world of micro-organism. The conscious power in micro-organism which dwells on the borderland between the vegetable and animal world have the power of perceiving their environment and position. This is manifested in their approach, attack and intake of food, flying from harmful substances and reproduction by division. All these movements are positive and not reflex. Though they have no special conducting or centralizing organ of consciousness which are to be found in higher animals, yet there are positive evidences that conscious-power is distributed in their cells. In higher

animals, we find conscious-power at work in their ways of behaviour, their adaption to environment, their struggle for existence, their selfmultiplication process, their instinctive tendencies and even in their intelligent reaction to external stimuli and reponse to human appeal. Cakrapāni, in his Bhanumati states that there is an inherent stupified conscious power in plants. Udayana, the great logician, holds that plants have a dull dormant conscious power. Manu says that plants are animals because they have life, their consciousness is obscured. In the 'Mahābhārata, Vṛigu says to Bharadvāja that plants have various senses, for they are affected by light, heat, sound, vision etc. Mahāmohopādhyā Chandra Kanto Tarkālankāra, in his lecture on Hindu Philosophy says, "The consciousness which manifests itself in man is not altogether a new creation but an unfolding process of that which has ever existed in the elements of which he is composed." Modern researches in Biology have amply proved that life is an 'autonomous self-assertiveness' which by progressive realisation achieves self-consciousness in man the apex of the evolutionary process. It is evident, wherever there is any stress of life, conscious power has been at work. In other words, life the manifestation of conscious power, "the Elan Vital" refuses to be explained in terms of physics and chemistry. A living organism is not a machine, is not governed by mechanical laws. It is characterised by an inward free urge for self-adaptation, self-expression, self-multiplication which a mechanical whole or machine is not. Its action is characterised as free by its behaviour towards the environment not determined by any impact from outside but by an inward urge from within which is nothing other than cosmic conscious-power. Life is an onward

upward rush for the achievement of mind in higher animals. The instinctive conduct of micro-organisms and lower animals gradually has evolved towards the achievement of higher animals. Finally, life emerges as a self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence in man who not only thinks, feels and moves but is also conscious of being the subject, the knower of thinking, feeling and willing and controls, directs all these fluctuating States and processes of mind either towards the service of the self or towards bondage to mundane values. This is so, because life and mind being manifestations of free cosmic power are free to express themselves either for self-regeneration or for self-degradation. It is by its own self-limiting, self-veiling power that the Self sinks into the sleep of self-obliviousness and it is by his own free nature that it awakens from the deep caverns of slumbering memory, that is from bondage to suffering, to the day light self-conscious, self-luminous "Intelligence". It is the intrinsic free Divine "Śivattva" in man which by its own irresistible free will which in terms of Divine grace "Anugraha Śakti" never forshakes him but ever up-lifts him for his own self-recognition. All the darkness of night can not put out the light of this single lamp. The intrinsic dynamism or "Vimarsa Śakti" in Śiva or the power of shining forth into the world of objects and persons out of the fulness of life and joy within is the outgoing current. The return current consists in progressive transcendence over the shackles of bondage, "The constructive Philosophy of Tantra Śāstra" has an ennobling hope-inspiring lesson for humanity which does not speak of "loss of paradise" or "eternal perdition". The essence of its teaching consists in the affirmation of faith in

man, in the conservation of values, in the freedom of the self. Man is immortal, free, divine in nature. Freedom, Divinity and Immortality ever abides in him and leads him on as a kindly light amidst the encircling gloom when the night is dark and man feels that he is far from home. It is his own self-limiting power or Māyā-Śakti not imposed by any outward God or Lord from outside that binds him down to 'Samsāra' and it is the intrinsic "Divine grace" in him that awakens him up from the sleep of ignorance i.e., from self-imposed 'Māyā Śakti' or self-limiting power. It is evident that Māyā Śakti or veiling power of Neiscience ever abides in the nature of the Absolute or parameswara, just as the Moon's rays are indistinguishable from the Moon.

The ultimate supreme Power or Śakti according to Śāktāgama is inseparable from Śiva or the Absolute. In other words, the ultimate power in its subtlest potentiality is the indeterminate Śiva and the subtlest potentiality when manifested is Śakti or power. This is the non-dualistic standpoint of the Śākta and Śaiva philosophy. This Supreme power has a dual aspect as Ciṭ-Śakti or pure consciousness or 'self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence', and as Māyā-Śakti which is manifested in the material, the vital and the mental order. Ciṭ Śakti or self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence the supreme conscious power charged with irresistible free will manifests itself as the 'Elan Vital' or the cosmic life-force, as the subtle psychic-force and as the subtle matter or cosmic physical force. The world is, therefore, power and nothing else. It is Prāna-sakti or life, Mana-śakti or mind, and Bhuta-śakti or matter. It follows, therefore, there is nothing which may be called dead, inert passivity.

In Acharya Śankara's philosophy, the ultimate Reality is the non-relational Absolute which contradicts the relative. The world, therefore, is merely an appearance non-reality i.e., which appears as real but ultimately non-real. This means that there is an inner selfcontradiction in Acharya Śankara's Absolute contradicting or negating the manifested Universe. The transcendental Experience is not the "Integral Experience", but purely the Absolute as such. It is mere "Prakāśa". This is the ether of consciousness, "Cidākaśa" and none of its modes. In supreme non-polarised 'Nirvikalpa Samādhi', this changeless principle is realised. According to the Ācarya the highest plane stands in contradiction to the lower plane. Real change or parināma stated by the "Vedānta paribhāsa" exists when the effect or the phenomenon and the ground belongs to the same plane of existence, e.g., clay and pot, milk and curd, both belong to the empirical plane or "Vyabahārika Plane". "Parināma hi Upādānasa masattvaka Kāryāpti." When however, the effect is on a different level, the effect belongs to the empirical level and the other to the 'prātibhāsika', there is 'Vibarta'. Thus in the case of rope-snake, the Sattvā of the rope is empirical but the Sattvā of the rope appearing as snake is only prātibhāsika. For the same reason, the rope and the whole universe, the 'Jagat-prapanca' is a vibarta in relation to the Absolute transcendental experience. Therefore the Absolute, according to the 'Vedānta' is merely prakāśa without any Vimarsa or Śakti. It is evident that Śakti or Power has been eliminated from Śankara's interpretation of Vedānta Philosophy. In Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy, however the Absolute is "Prakāśa-Vimarsāṭ-maka", i.e., it is an 'Integral Experience' in which both

‘Prakāśa’ and Vimarsa ever abide in inseparable union. The quiescent, changeless, transcendental Ciṭ or Self-conscious, Self-luminous “Intelligence” and the evolving Śakti, the subtlest power of shinning forth remains in inseparable union. The Śaiva and Śāktāgama calls this ‘whole experience’ or the all-comprehensive integral Experience in which all aspects are not parts of the real but they are in the real. Therefore, the Bhuta Śakti or ‘Bhurloka’ or the material plane, the prāna-śakti or the “Bhubarloka” and the Svar-loka, the mental plane are real as they are grounded in the ultimately real, i.e., all is real. The Turiya or transcendental experience is real, the empirical experience is real and the Jāgrat experience or the waking experience is real. When I am in dreamless sound sleep my experience is real as long I am in the state of dreamless sound sleep. It is to be specially noted here that changelessness and change, Prakāśa and Vimarsa do not contradict each other. Because a thing changes, therefore it is unreal, is not a sound argument. Therefore the Absolute has both prakāśa and Vimarsa aspects. For these aspects form one whole. There is, therefore a real nexus between the Universe which is the Māyā Śakti and the Ciṭ-Svarupa or the Absolute. The world, is therefore, not Māyā as the Vedānta holds, Māyā by itself according to “Ācārya Śankara” is indefinable, indescribable anirvacaniya. The Sankhya here nicely says “Na hi anirvacaniyasya Khyāti”. In other words, to say that Māyā is inexplicable is saying nothing of it. Further Māyā is neither really sat, nor unreal nor asat, not partly real nor partly unreal and therefore an inexplicable alogical principle. It is not the Absolute or the ultimate Reality, for it is the Enternal falsity, “Mityābhutā

Sanātani", while Brahma or the Absolute is Eternal Truth. Though in the Acārya's doctrine Māyā is not a second Reality, yet being absolutely non-existent in the ultimate Reality, is somehow posited as a second Reality to explain the universe of objects, which according to Vedānta is absolutely non-real. Thus there is a tinge of dualism in his non-dualistic philosophy. According to Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy, Māyā is the real self-obscurating Śakti or power of Brahma or the Absolute. Parama Śiva has two aspects namely, (I) The power of self-limitation or obliviousness which in Sanskrit is stated to be 'Tirobhāba' and 'Anugraha'. By the former, His real nature is obscured and thus the evolution of the world is nothing but the manifestation of the Māyā-Śakti or self-veiling power. By the latter power namely 'Anugraha Śakti' or Ciṭ Śakti, the world of becoming gradually ceases and returns to its subtlest potentiality. Thus the whole universe of matter, life and mind already in their subtlest form indistinguishable by name and form ever abides in the Absolute or Parā-Śakti or Parama Śiva. Māyā is considered as the externally intrinsic free power of self-limitation of the Absolute by virtue of which material, vital and physical forms emerge out of the formless 'Parācit' or supreme Conscious Power. In 'Iswarapratyavijñā' Māyā has been spoken of as that which is nothing but the notion of difference in things entertained by the subject whose true nature is pure undifferentiated conscious power (Chāp. JII). Thus subjectively viewed, Māyā is the process of projecting dichotomy of subject and object in the 'All-comprehensive Integral Experience'. This is due to intrinsic power in the Absolute Experiencing principle which shines forth out His irresistible free will

or 'Ānanda-Śakti' into the never ending dynamic flow of physical, vital and psychical forms. This is Māyā objectively viewed. Matter, life and mind, thus, according to Āgamic Philosophy is obscured spirit or veiled spirit and the act of obscuration is effected by Māyā-Śakti as the intrinsic power of the Absolute experiencing Principle. Under the influence of Māyā Śakti, the eternal appears as the temporal or as having limited duration. This is technically called Kāla-Śakti or Time-power. In other words, changelessness becomes change, 'Being becomes becoming.' Māyā, therefore, is according to Śaiva-Śākta philosophy is the intrinsic free power in self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. It is the self veiling itself. The most important point which is to be noted that from the standpoint of Siddhi or self-realisation all is self and there is nothing but the self. The physical, the vital and the psychical are transmuted into the self until the self is realised. Man and the Universe is subject to Māyā, is under the influence of Māyā-Śakti and objects act according to the forms which it imposes upon it. Whether the doctrine be accepted as the final solution or not, it is intellectually elevating and spiritually inspiring. It is a sublime doctrine, because the whole Universe is seen in its truth, beauty and glory. The intellect is not distracted and led astray by the notion of any unconscious Māyā which is not Brahma, which is a 'tertium quid,' a third principle indefinable, indescribable and unexplainable, neither real nor unreal entity. Confronted with such a paradox the human understanding naturally fails to understand and comprehend, how can the unexplainable explain the explainable world. This doctrine is hope-inspiring because it says that the Infinite and the Eternal is to be sought here and now and not in a

transcendental world afar of which most men know nothing and can not realize the self without attaining the State of 'Nirvikalpa Samādhi.' It allows all men, irrespective of high intellectual attainment and emotional excellence to understand, comprehend and realize the transcendental and immanent spiritual principle in all. For faith is an affirmation of Reality in the physical, vital and mental planes which comprises the 'here and now' and not a transcendental experience bifurcated from the physical, vital and mental planes. The great drama is enacted on this plane and not in a world afar. This has been enjoined in Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy as 'Lilā or Divine Play' in the heart of the human. The battle of Kurukṣhetra or 'Srikrishnalilā' was enacted on the physical and mental plane and the Dharmakṣhetra or Life Divine was established for ever and ever on the human plane. The psychology of play, if correctly understood, is a pointer to this fact. When a child plays with clay-pot and sweets made of clay he or she forgets for the time being, actual sweets, actual nature of things, otherwise play would have been an impossible affair. Similarly this universe which is the play ground of the Divinity in humanity requires a kind of self-obliviousness or Māyā-Śakti. In other words, by his own Māyā-Śakti the Divine veils Himself up in human form. The whole universe has been said to be 'Lilā' or Divine-play and without this Māyā Śakti or power of self-obliviousness, the Divine play could never have been possible, in other words, creation would never have taken place. So Māyā-Śakti or cosmic power contains the germ and potency of Divine creation, i.e., the intrinsic dynamism of the Absolute to shine forth into the world of real persons and real objects. This is the 'Nisusi, the

irresistible free-will in the Absolute towards self-abnegation in a world of finite things and beings. The infinite and the finite, mortality and immortality, bondage and freedom are not poles asunder, do not contradict each other but finitude, mortality and bondage are involved in the Infinite Divinity, Immortality and Freedom.

The Absolute by His own irresistible free-will or Māyā-Śakti assumes human form. The path of enjoyment and the path of emancipation is in the very nature of man, there is nothing bad in enjoyment itself, if it is not carnal enjoyment absolutely considered. Dharma is self-control, harnessing the flesh, the senses, life and mind to the service of the self for self-realisation. Sreya and preya, Bhukti and Mukti, the life of enjoyment and the life of devotion are wedded together for liberation. Hence it is said Māyā-Śakti and Ciṭ-Śakti are constitutive elements of Maheswari or the Ādyā-Śakti. It is evident that Consciousness whose intrinsic dynamism consists in irresistible free will-power is in all manifestations. Human existence which exhibits a kind of excellence and glory of the universal all pervading Consciousness is a rare phenomenon in the hierarchy of the evolutionary process. There is, therefore, according to Śaiva-Śākta philosophy not a particle of atom, electron, life-force or mind-force which is not macrocosmic conscious-power manifested in different degrees in the changing forms and names. The Upanisad says 'I salute Her, the Samvid who shines in the form of space, time and all objects therein. I completely surrender my ego sense to the universal self-conscious, self-luminous all-pervading indwelling informing spiritual Principle in whose glory all is manifested in

various degrees in the physical, the vital, the mental and the spiritual planes'. The process of evolution has not ended in modern man, atoms and electrons are not the highest achievements in the evolutionary process, neither self-obliviousness is man's destiny. There is a progressive realization towards higher and higher values not yet attained. The future destiny of Man will be the attainment of a super-conscious state in which past, present and future is an eternal 'Now' forming a total introversion of the values which he has cherished so long. What has been achieved in the present is surging forward to this future destiny with an inconceivable momentum. We are in communion with the 'One' for the salvation of the 'human' now weltering in the whirlpool of suffering, wavering between faith and reason, Scepticism and Idealism without direction.

It has already been pointed out that Māyā-Śakti and 'Ciṭ-Śakti' are intrinsic Śaktis or powers of the Absolute, Parama Śiva or Parabrahma as variously described in the Vaidik and Tantrik 'Śrutis'. The evolution of the world of inorganic, organic and psychical beings is due to Māyā-Śakti or the irresistible free will of the Absolute to shine forth into the world of persons and objects. So the world is nothing but Power or Śakti of the Absolute manifested. The outward-going current is due to Māyā-Śakti in which the self is enveloped in self-obliviousness by His own free will for the evolution of the Universe. On the other hand, Ciṭ-Śakti comprises the inward-going current or the return current by virtue of which the self progressively awakens to His pristine glory and realises Himself as the same self here, there and

every where. Matter, life and mind are completely spiritualised and the 'Oneness' of all is obtained. This is the highest state of Samādhi, wherein we reach the equilibrated, harmonious state of Ciṭ and Śakti i.e., Consciousness in the eternal embrace of Śakti. This Absolute power or Ciṭ Śakti may be described as the equilibrated State of the powers of creation, preservation and destruction. When this equilibrium due to its own intrinsic dynamism is broken there is a stress in the 'will-to create' "Srisrikshā", 'Time-power' (Kala-Satki) emerges and it is through Time-power that the autonomous outward surge of Eternity proceeds. This is the great magnificent, omnipotent power in the Absolute which evolves the world of objects and persons out of the womb, as it were, of Ciṭ-Śakti. It is thus evident that Absolute-Consciousness or Brahma-Caitanya or Ciṭ-Śakti is a dynamic spiritual principle which eternally and alternately goes forth into the phases of manifestation or self-limitation, 'Unmisati' and involution, 'Nimisati'. Each 'Kalpa' which in Śaiva-Śākta philosophy comprises 'Unmesa' and 'Nimesa', evolution and involution, expansion and contraction of the 'Divine Life'. Evolution and involution together constitutes a moment in Eternity and each moment represents a 'Kalpa' which forms a continuum of an inconceivable infinite number of Kalpas. Evolution being an eternal process having neither beginning nor end, the countless kalpas in the eternal past, the present and the eternal future form a continuum forming a series in which they are linked up together by symmetrical relation. In other words each successive 'Universe' or 'Kalpa' comes into being as the inevitable sequence of the preceeding Kalpa. Strangely enough, this view of 'Śaiva and Śākta'

philosophy has been echoed in Modern physics. Sir Arthur Eddington says, "in ordinary and primary physics which knows nothing of Time's arrow, there is no discrimination of cause and effect but events are connected by a symmetrical relation which is viewed from either end." Modern physics, in course of the analysis of the physical world holds the view that it is beginningless as well as endless series of events in which there is no time-interval. It is to be noted here, that *Ciṭ-Sakti* is not to be identified with consciousness. Consciousness is only a limited manifestation of *Ciṭ-Sakti* in which all forms of consciousness subsist. Hence it has been said that Eternal, changeless substratum, *Ciṭ* is the changeless principle of all changing experiences and changing objects of experience. *Ciṭ* is the ultimate Reality. The Para-Brahma is both *Ciṭ-saṭ* and *Ānanda*. The self is its own object to the illumined Yogi. The whole universe is the self or *Ātman*. The Yogi follows the path of the upward going current or introversion or *Urdha Kundalinī*. In other words, the self awakens to its pristine glory. *Ciṭ-Śakti* is not a mere function, accident or epiphenomenon but it is the ever-existing plenum which sustains, vitalises, mentalizes, spiritualises all existence. It is not the consciousness of anything i.e., it is not an experience of 'this' or 'that', it is not experience of anything particular. Hence it is 'impartial' i.e., all pervading Universal *Ciṭ-Śakti*. It is the consciousness-continuum, in which there is apparently no sensible diversity of features, no preference pragmatic interest. It is the quiescent, '*Santam Advaitam*'. In order that its subtest potentiality may shine forth, there must be difference of potentials between two points, just as in order to understand a straight line we must cognise

the distinctiveness of points, similarly to have a direction, a reference, a movement of attention, there must be distinctive moments in eternity. The Absolute 'Integral Experience' or *Ciṭ-Śakti* remains in the undifferentiated quiescent whole in which *Vimarsa Śakti* or the first flutter or stress to shine forth remains in utter potentiality. As the *Katha upanishad* says 'All things shine because He shines'. The *Bṛihadāranyaka* says, 'other beings live on a fraction of the Great Bliss. This bliss arising out of 'Siva-Śakti Samarasya' is 'One', for they are inseparable. Hence She is called 'Ekabhoga or Svarūpānanda' (*Trīṣaṭi Chap. II, 32*). It is the self-existent 'Nirādhāra', Eternal Nityā, changeless (*avikarī*), undifferentiated, (*Abhinnā*), all-perfect (*Purna*), time-less (*Sasvatī*), all-pervading (*Sarvaga*), self-illuminating (*Svayamjoti*), Pure (*Suddhā*), Integral Experience. As *Saṭ* or pure Being, it is the perfect unity beyond the opposites of 'this' or 'that', 'here' and 'there' 'then' and 'now'. As 'Purnānanda', it is the supreme bliss which shines forth upon the dissolution of all dualism and duality of happiness and misery. Perfect Bliss is the nature (*Swarupa*) of *Ciṭ* or Pure Absolute consciousness and not mere changing happiness or pleasure or sorrow of some particular kind. In our empirical consciousness the self is set over the world of objects which it wants to possess to grab, utilise for its own self-aggrandisement. The quiescent supreme Bliss or Consciousness is beyond the changing fleeting, happiness or sorrow. *Sachchidānanda* or 'Being-*Ciṭ*-Bliss' persist in all forms of becoming. It is the innermost self in every being. It is not only immanent or all-pervading but also all-transcending. In its immanent aspect it shines forth into, the Universe of atomic or electronic power in physical

things, as the 'Elan Vital Prānāspanda' in living beings as psychical power in superior animals and in man as 'Jiva-Caitanya' or particularised empirical consciousness. In its transcendental aspect, it is beyond all limitations, unconditioned, undifferentiated, 'Integral Experience', the changeless principle of all. "We live in the infinite, all finitude exists in Cīṭ.

CHAPTER—VII

Theory of Evolution

A comparative estimate of the different theories of evolution as given in the Sāṃkhya, Nāya, Vedānta, western philosophy and Tantra will be very useful for our purpose. According to Sāṃkhya view, the effect is already there in a subtle form in the cause and the cause undergoes real transformation in producing the effect. Prakṛiti which is the root cause, the first cause, remains in an equilibrated state, though somehow undergoes real transformation in evolving the later evolutes, modes and attributes. In the conception of Prakṛiti, we find a dual aspect : (a) A Changeless aspect prior to evolution and (b) Changing aspect. Indeed every change involves transition from one form to another. And Prakṛiti is said to be the permanent Reality of these changes of forms in and through all of which its unity ever persists. So in the course of causation, one form may be said to be the cause of another. But this is not due to the form but to Prakṛiti which is the material cause of all forms and which is their content. According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, all causal relation is 'prakṛiti-vikṛitibhāva', prakṛiti being the cause and Vikṛiti or transformation is its effect. The causal state is the permanent aspect of Prakṛiti and the changing state, the modes and forms ever appear and disappear

till universal dissolution, when Prakriti or the materia prima will absorb within itself all its forms and remain in its pristine original Sāmyā-vasthā or equilibrated state. Further Prakriti is not moved by any impact from outside, it is self-moved, 'Sataḥparinamī'. The Rājaṣ element or motion is inherent in it and it is not any external addendum. The cause of evolution, therefore, is in Prakriti itself. 'Rājaṣ' is eternal motion inherent in Prakriti is not inert substance. Its evolution or manifestation is held in check by the 'Tama-āvaraṇa'. The Tama guna is considered in Sāṃkhya as the enveloping principle of inertia. It is to be noted here, that according to this philosophy, evolution of nature has no meaning apart from the individual Jiva or the empirical self for whom it is intended. 'Bhogārthaṃ Kaivalyārthaṃ' The Sāṃkhya-Yoga evolution, therefore, is not a mechanical process but teleological. It serves the 'Purusārtha' of the individual Jiva. This is the one end or ideal of the evolutionary process. It is with reference to the merits of individuals or jiva that evolution takes place as soon as merit is counteracted by demerit and demerit by merit, the process of evolution becomes clear as prakriti changes itself into the appropriate effect. All finite causes and effects therefore are in the womb of prakriti. Thus 'Prakriti' contains within herself everything, every finite cause and effect, all modes and forms potentially, for prakriti is their ultimate cause. Thus there is nothing outside prakriti to initiate the course of evolution. Moreover, the external world of objects has come into being in the course of the evolutionary process to serve as the object of experience of the experiencing subject and vanishes as soon as the purpose is fulfilled. The varieties of Prakriti's evolution, therefore,

is initiated by that principle, moral in its nature which governs the varieties of such experience. Therefore, the whole scheme of nature is teleological. Thus there is no conflict here between teleology and causation. The most important point to be noted here is that the 'Law of Karma' which is the guiding moral principle is not the final thing. Its application is limited in the field of evolution but it is ultimately transcended by the attainment of the supreme enlightenment which reveals the self as it-is-in-itself and as different from Prakriti. By the attainment of this discriminative knowledge, 'Viveka-jñānam', the purusa or the self realises itself as a self-luminous principle completely distinct from Prakriti. The Sankhya is a dualistic metaphysics in which the self and Prakriti remain always opposed to each other and always remain as they are in themselves. Evolution is, therefore 'Visadriṣa-Pariṇāma', or transformation of the gunas in other forms and modes; just as milk, the cause of curd undergoes transformation into the effect. The milk in its own form is not there when it is transformed into the curd, the curd is the 'Ghanibhūta' massive form of milk. In other words, there is difference of forms but not of essence. This is known as 'Satkarya-Vāda' of Sāṃkhya philosophy according to which the effect is already there in the cause and is only a transformation or change. The most important point to be noted here in this connection, is that there is no dualism in Prakriti, the root cause of evolution. There is only dualism between purusa or the self and Prakriti or the not-self but the moot point, 'how prakriti which is opposed to the self can ever come in contact with the self or Purusa without which evolution can not be initiated' is not explained satisfactorily. The

equilibrated state of prakriti is nothing other than motion at rest but this intrinsic motion or dynamism can not be actualised without reference to purusa or self which stands ever in contradiction to prakriti. This difficulty remains unsolved in dualistic Sāṃkhya Philosophy as in all sorts of dualism.

According to the Nāya view which is commonsense Realism, the cause and the effect are two distinct concepts though bound together by a mysterious link of relationship. Though the effect is distinct from its cause and is non-existent in the cause prior to its manifestation or effectuation, it still is inherent in the cause, before its production and after its destruction technically called 'Prāgbhāva' and 'Dhangsābhāva' and somehow predictable of its cause alone. But what constitutes the link of relationship between the cause and effect nothing is said beyond the fact that it is in the nature of the effect to be thus intimately related to its material cause. This 'beyond the fact' is an ultimate fact and has to be taken for granted. This amounts practically to a confession of weakness in this theory.

According to the Vedānta Philosophy, the supreme Brahma or the Absolute is pure 'Jñānaṃ' without the slightest stress of either actual or potential activity or Vimārasa Śakti. It is self-luminous but not self-conscious. The Vedānta Theory of evolution is known as 'Vibarta-Vāda' according to which change and changelessness, the Eternal and the Temporal are contradictory to each other. Evolution means change and therefore it is nothing but an illusory experience. The world is mere appearance and has

no reality of the Real in it. Reality contradicts change. Reality is ever abiding, unchanging principle. The appearances are unreal and therefore non-existent in the supreme Reality, either in potentiality or in actuality. Thus being non-existent in the transcendently Real, it is merely an illusion. Further being non-existent in the supremely Real, they are not of the nature of Reality in their essence. The world of appearances, therefore, belong to the realm of Māyā which is the inexplicable, indefinable alogical principle of eternal falsity. It is neither Saṭ nor being, for it is non-existent in the eternally Saṭ nor it can be absolutely non-existent, because the 'This or Idam' or the empirically real constitutes a beginningless series of experiences or facts of experiences. Thus Māyā or Indefinite illusory Neiscience has been defined by the upholders of the doctrine of Vibarta as an inexplicable, alogical eternal falsity which is non-existent in the Absolute or Brahman but holds true only in the chaotic flux of experiences. The principle of Māyā is applicable, therefore, to appearances or phenomena only which are absolutely unreal. The world of matter, life, mind, intellect, ego-sense are ever changing and therefore eternally false. The world both in the subjective order and the objective order is illusion just as a thirsty traveller travelling in the desert takes for granted the hot glittering waves of sandy land for an oasis. Therefore, the evolutionary process as well as its products are illusory experiences and nothing else. Evolution from the standpoint of world-experience holds good in the realm of practical and empirical experience but an illusory experience from the standpoint of transcendental Reality which is the Absolute or Supreme Brahma. The Vibarta theory therefore, is not an

explanation of the evolutionary process, because it explains it away.

In contemporary western thought, Evolution means the unrolling unfolding process of matter-in-motion. By successive progression, a world system evolves out of formless, contentless nebula or the empty ocean of Ether, gradually a habitable planet emerges by blind physical and mechanical laws operating upon it. Protoplasmic life, then, originates on account of chance combinations of atomic particles in matter and last of all mind with all its inner workings evolves out of the life principle at a later stage by accidental variation. Thus the fish is the descendant of the insect, the bipeds and the quadrupeds appear, man as a quadruped animal is allied to the 'genes' of the ape who has by chance learnt to stand erect with two legs and has by chance got rid of characteristics unsuited to his new mode of life and progress. Matter in motion or motion acting on matter is nothing but the law of 'Natural Selection' working in conformity with the laws of 'Struggle for Existence', 'Adaptation to environment' and 'Heredity'. In the course of the evolutionary process, certain accidental variations take place in species which Nature blindly selects and as a result, these species survive and thereby somehow persist. This old theory of mechanical evolution, however, has been challenged by the Vitalists and the Neo-vitalists who hold that life is not an accidental by-product of blind matter-in-motion, that it is not the result of accidental combination of physical and chemical molecules. There is something in life, something *Sui generis*, something unique which can not be explained in terms of physics and Chemistry.

A living organism is a self-multiplying, self-creating, self-preserving, self-expressing self-asserting power which matter-in-motion is not. Equally important are the recent conclusions arrived at by researchers in the biological realm. The phenomenon of Heredity, i.e., acquired characteristics 'are not Handed down to the posterity. The modern tendencies in vitalistic, neo-vitalistic and teleological theories may be called the forerunner of a more coherent, rational, scientific philosophical explanation of the process of evolution. It appears that the evolution of Life working in and upon the conditions of matter must have been produced and governed not by a material principle but by an all-embracing Life-principle, 'The Elan Vital', similarly mind is not an accidental variation of the life-principle. Further what in modern psychology is known as mind is the superficial mind, its workings and behaviour on the surface; but mind is more than the surface mind. There is the ocean of the all-pervading, omnipresent, omniscient Mind involved in the evolutionary process as the indwelling, informing spiritual principle guiding, directing, controlling the course of the evolutionary process for self-realisation. It is not matter-in-motion but the indivisible inseparable union of the macrocosmic life-principle with self-luminous, self-conscious spiritual principle working on matter, initiating the course of evolution. **Heredity is only a material shadow or one of the material conditions of the rebirth of body, individual life and mind into new forms.** Heredity gives to life and mind which are private and individual and are ultimately to be consumed and returned to the sub-conscious Mind which is the personal treasury. Thus in place of a mechanical, repetitive, rigid evolution out of matter-in-motion or out

of blind Nature by physical and mechanical laws, we are on the threshold of a 'Divine Consciousness' which is the omnipotent, omniscient and immanent indwelling spiritual principle in all, working out the destiny of the Universe of matter, life and mind. We are today confronted with the inward vision of a supreme Personality 'Purusottama' or supreme Self, though dimly visualized in the subliminal depth of our conscious life. We have no choice here but to accept it or to deny it. Acceptance will mean the conservation of the Supreme Values of life namely Freedom, Divinity and Immortality which mankind has ever cherished ; on the other hand its rejection means denial of all the moral, rational, spiritual values, aspirations and progress, a reversal of the evolutionary process which means universal destruction ; in Hindu Śāstra known as the cyclic order or Kalpa or 'Mannantara'. What is apparent today is that Materialism has reached the height of its power and aggressiveness. A counter principle stirring within human consciousness containing within itself the germ and potency of a new regeneration will swallow up the blazing grandeur of Materialism and burst forth out of its intrinsic dynamism into the daylight of 'Pratyaviñña' or recognition of the same self here, there and every where. Rejection or denial of the supreme values of life means obliviousness of all that is divine in man. We are going back to the realm of animality quarrelling with one another for a morsel of food. Hence U. N. O. or any other form of International organisation has turned to be a 'league of hungry wolves' pitifully crying at one another for selfish aggrandisement. We are confined today in the prison-house of our own ideas, isms, opinions

conventions and all this means a state of self-obliviousness, of slavery, of cowardice. It is only by evolving out of the sumbliminal depth of human-consciousness, all our latent powers to the focus of a self-luminous, self-conscious Intelligence that the liberation of mankind from the fetters of Māterialism consists.

The fact is that evolution is the self-expression or shinning forth of the irresistible free will 'Ichcha-Śakti' of the supreme Self. It is the spontaneous creative play of the supreme Self with itself. Evolution does not mean mechanical causation i.e., given the same condition, same effect will follow rigidly. Scientific researches in the field of evolution, however, go to show, instead of slow, steady, minute gradation and repetition, there are evidences of new creation by rapid sudden outbursts, outbreaks, as it were, of manifestation from the Unmanifest. Instead of mechanical, rigid evolution out of matter-in-motion or mechanical power, we are moving today towards the affirmation of a flexible, intensely surprising dramatic evolution working out miracles and wonders in its unrolling, unfolding process. We are now raising the pertinent question, 'is there a point at which the mechanistic line of thought ceases?' The fact is, there is a point, one single point in Eternity. This point is the Self. This realm of the Self is at once the source of our sufferings and at the same time of our highest aspirations viz. Freedom, Immortality and Divinity. No doubt, experience from the outside world is the starting point of all thoughts but there is in man, a free imaginative faculty, intuitive fore-sight, far-sight and insight, i.e., inward urge for going beyond the given experience. Were it not so,

mankind would have been deprived of all poetry, all music, all the artistic, scientific excellence and wonders, all the treasures in the flower garden of the human heart that man ever possesses. This conscious power transcending the limits of the given experience is the expression of the intrinsic divinity, immortality and freedom of the Self of man, the 'Nisus', the driving force in the evolutionary process both in man and nature. The self in man is Free, Immortal and Divine. Considered as it-is-in-itself, it is the indeterminate Unmanifest, considered as polarised in the subject and the object, in the experiencer and experience, it is the manifest Universe of which man is the centre. When the self manifests itself, it is on account of its own irresistible free will for self-expression. It is called the Māyā-Śakti which is the magnificent concept, ground on which Tantra is based. The term Śakti comes from the root 'Śaka' which means 'to be able'. It is the power where-by the supreme Self manifests itself and its powers ; for Śakti or power and its possessor or Śaktimān are in ever abiding relation of Identity. When power remains in its subtlest potentiality, it is Indeterminate and is called in Tantra 'Ciṭ-Śakti. When this 'Ciṭ-Śakti' shines forth in the evolutionary process, it is Māyā-Śakti. The supreme Self or Śiva in its transcendental aspect is 'Ciṭ-Śakti' and Māyā-Śakti in its immanent aspect or the aspect of blossoming forth in Evolution. In the 'Kulasaudāminī Nigama', Śakti addressing Śiva says, 'Thou art the Guru of all, I entered into thy body as Śakti and therefore Thou didst become the Lord. There is none but Myself who is the intrinsic Mother-to-create or the Universal free-Will to create (Kāryavibhavinī). Therefore, it is when creation

takes place, sonship is in Thee. Thou alone art the Father who wills what I do, 'Kārya Vibhāvaka', i.e., She is the vessel which receives the nector that flows from Nityānanda or eternal Bliss. By the union of Śiva and Śakti, evolution proceeds. 'Śiva-Śakti-Samājogaṭ Jāyate Sristi-kalpanā'. As all, in the universe is both Śiva-Śakti (Śiva-Śakti-Mayaḥ) therefore, 'Oh Lord, Thou art in all and I am in all'. In the Mahānirvāna Tantra Śiva says to Devi, "Thou art thyself the 'Parāprakṛiti' of the supreme Self." Thus the 'All-consciousness', that is, Consciousness in inseparable union with Māya-Sakti or irresistible free will to shine forth in the evolutionary process is what explains correctly what we mean by evolution or self-manifestation of the Absolute or Consciousness-Bliss-Power. In the Kulārṇava Tantra, it is said, "Some desire dualism as in the Sāṅkhya system, others abstract Monism. Such, however, know not 'My truth' which is neither Dualism nor abstract Monism (Dvaitādvaita-Vibhajita)". The Tantra thus bridges over the gulf between Dualism and abstract Monism. It has been nicely said in the Upanisadic aphorism, 'when Brahma is known, all is known'.

As to the question, 'Why Evolution takes place'?—there can be no answer in the ultimate sense. Suffice it to say that it is the Divine play of the Universal Mother, the dynamic irresistible free-will in Śiva or All-consciousness. The Tantra, however, in common with other Indian scriptures recognises 'Adṛṣṭa-Sṛiṣṭi', or the doctrine that motive-force to creation or evolution is proximately called 'Adṛṣṭa' or merits and demerits of actions accumulated and are being accumulated by the empirical

self in and through the cycle of births and rebirths. But Karma which is collectively our animal, rational, moral and spiritual activities are the expression of the irresistible free will or Māyā-Śakti or limiting power of the self itself (Mīyate anayā iti Māyā). It is self's own power of self-obliviousness which binds the self to the fetters of his own 'Karma' or merits and demerits. Thus the self becomes involved in 'Saṃsāra'. Karma in Tantra is eternal and therefore requires an explanation. The process of evolution, preservation and dissolution according to Tantra, is an unceasing process, an eternal rhythm of cosmic power, of cosmic life, cosmic mind which is the Divine Play of the self. So it has been beautifully stated in Tantra, "The Series of universes appear and disappear with the opening and shutting of Her eyes". Evolution is the blossoming forth or awakening of Śiva out of the fulness of joy within (Un-mesha) and involution is the 'Tirobhāba' or withdrawal of his own power, Māyā-Śakti (Nimesa). The existence of Karma, therefore, implies the Will-to-create. We produce karma, merits and demerits of our actions as the result of free will and when produced, it becomes itself the cause of it. In the aggregate of 'Karma' (Prārabdha) which at one period or another period ripens, there is at any particular time, some which are ripe and others which are not (Sanciya māna Karma). For the fruition of the former, evolution takes place in the form of the Jiva or the individual ego. When the actions which are absorbed in Māyā-Śakti becomes in course of time ripened, the Māyā-Śakti or the irresistible free will for manifestation arises in the Ego-consciousness or Jiva for his own enjoyment. This state of Māyā which is free 'Cosmic Will' is variously called in Śruti as 'Ikshana'. 'May I be many'

and simultaneously there takes place what is known in Tantra 'Sadrisapariṇāma' in which the 'Supreme Bindu' on the self's ego-sense, the causal stress appears. Time according to them, connotes change and continuity which is the inherent, irresistible creative will of the Self or Parama-Śiva. The function of time is expression or 'Ullāsha' or 'Unmesa'. Hence in non-dualistic Tantric philosophy, Reality has been associated more with Integral continuity than with change, transformation or parināma. Continuity, 'Vimarsa' and Integrity 'Prakāsa' are the constitutive factors in determining the course of evolution. In the conception of 'Ābhāsa', we have a beautiful synthesis of changelessness and change. In short, the 'Ābhāsa Process' gives us a concrete, dynamic, realistic, synthetic, synoptic world-view in tune with the spiritual, (Pratyā-vijñā Vimarsinī, Chap.-III). This doctrine of the process of shinning forth or gushing out or autonomous self-assertiveness of creative free-will out of the fulness of joy intrinsic in the Absolute or-Parama-Śiva is called "Ābhāsa-Paramārthavāda" as also Śvatantrya-Vāda. The 'Spanda-karikā' says, "That process of manifestation is to be known as opening out or blossoming forth as of a flower, whereby there arises in the Universal Mind of Parama-Śiva absorbed in some one thought, some other thought spontaneously arising by itself". This can be felt in our personal experience of thinking and experiencing out. It is the process whereby the homogeneous gradually unfolds itself into the heterogeneous, the subtle becoming the gross. In the Absolute the entire universe with all its variety remains latent in a state of perfect synthesis or perfect whole. Just as in the yolk of the peacock, the whole variety of colours, filaments, and all other parts

constitutive elements of the peacock-to-become remain in subtle concentrated form ; similarly the entire universe with its manifold variety remains in a state of perfect identity in the Absolute. This analogy has often been represented by the aphorism, 'Mayurānda-resa-nāya'. Therefore, the universe is a change not 'of' Brahman or Absolute but 'in' Brahma, change is not change of essence but change of form, a manifestation from subtle to the gross and the gross is not different from the subtle in essence, the heterogeneous is not different from the homogeneous and all 'Unmesa' or shinning forth is a process of becoming, a continuum. This has very aptly been said in the aphorism 'Purnamadaḥ Purnamidaḥ Purnāt purnamudacayte, Purnasya Purnamādāya Purnamevābaśisyate'. In other words, the whole from the whole, and remains always as it is in itself in spite of its manifestation ; as every bit of experience is intrinsically related to and identical in essence with all-comprehensive 'Integral Experience'. Thus 'Ābhāsa' may be compared to the process in which one light lightens up one or more lights without being exhausted in any way. Thus the process has been called a process of shinning forth from light to light. The doctrine of 'Ābhāsa' means, first of all, a change from the subtle to the gross, though the gross remains identical in essence with the subtle. In the second place, it implies that all change is in the Absolute and not of the Absolute consciousness. Thus though the light of Absolute consciousness shines forth out of the fulness of life, light and joy within, nevertheless it does not cease to be what it is in itself. The point may be further illustrated with reference to the life history of a single biological cell. A careful observation of it, will reveal that the cell-life multiplies

itself as it develops and expands but it cannot be said that a real division takes place in the principle of 'Life' itself. If it were so, then life in the new cells would become divided and thus would be diminished in each new cell. But it is an observed fact that there is as much life in new cells as there was in the original cell. Thus life remains one unique principle though manifested in the many, there is only manifestation which does not mean diminution or any real change. The life principle ever remains both qualitatively and quantitatively the same.

It may not be possible by the method of observation and experiment to perceive the source of life in the empirical and by means of empirical knowledge. It is attainable by the awakening of the faculty of super-sensuous perception for the source and ultimate nature of life, the 'Elan Vital' manifests itself in intuition than in intellect i.e., by living through life. The Tantra Śāstra says, Māyā is the irresistible free will-power in pure Absolute consciousness. The Māyā Śakti is in the Māyā-Śakti of the Absolute, Prakāśa or Ciṭ and Māyā-Śakti or Vimarsa or the shining forth of the Absolute are the two poles in inseparable union with each other. She is the unmanifested Universe in the pure Ciṭ or Being-Ciṭ in the form of undifferentiated Ciṭ, 'Avyākṛita Kalā' She is also the differentiated Ciṭ manifested in the Universe. In Her oneness she is Śaṭ-Ciṭ, in the many She is Saṭ-Ciṭ-Ānanda. The universe is the experience of Parama Śiva and the experience of Śiva can not be unreal. Thus the world is essentially real and not 'Eternal Falsity'. The Acarya of Tantra says, 'Brahma-khelā Idam Sarvaṃ, Sarvaṃ Khallidam Brahma'. In other words the universe is the play of

Brahma or Shinning forth of Brahma out of the fulness of joy and life within. The universe is thus the play of Brahma in Māya Śakti and the play is enacted within Him and not in anything outside of Him. Evolution is Divine play and is initiated not by any impact from outside but by an inward urge from within out of the fulness of joy and life. This Tantric view is also in conformity with the Śruti. 'Out of Bliss the Universe comes into existence'. The Tantra philosophy pointedly affirms that just as light and heat inseparably exit in fire, similarly Vimarsa or the Eternal Free-Will or Śakti eternally abides in 'Caitanay' or self-conscious, self-luminous 'Intelligence'. This freedom 'Svatantra' which remains identical with 'Caitanya', and yet shines forth into the infinite variety does not in the least change in its essence. It may be pointed out here that according to this philosophy, just as the question, 'why light illumines?'— is superfluous ; because it is the nature of light to illumine, to give more light. Similarly the question, why there is universal evolution is redundant, for the nature of the Light of Absolute consciousness is universal manifestation. Thus Being is real, becoming is real. The Saṭ-Ciṭ is Real, the Saṭ-Ciṭ-Ānanda is real and the manifestation of world order is real. Changelessness is real, change is real, evolution is real ; for change which is power or dynamism is in changelessness ; change is in the Real and not of the Real. There is no conceptual gulf between the Real and phenomena. All is real and the all is dynamic All-consciousness. This intrinsic dynamism or spontaneous free will-to-create is the indwelling spiritual power of shinning forth into the manifold of forms, both subjective and objective.

CHAPTER—VIII

The Evolution of the Tattvas or the Fundamental Principles of Manifestation.

According to Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy there are mainly three orders of Universal Manifestation :—

- (i) The Ideal or pure order of manifestation.
- (ii) The Pure-impure order of manifestation.
- (iii) The factual or empirical order of manifestation.

(i) The Ideal or pure order of manifestation comprises :—

- (a) The Śiva-Tattva. (b) The Śakti-Tattva.
- (c) The Śāda-Śīva Tattva. (d) Íśwara Tattva.

In the Absolute or Transcendental Experience or conventionally in the innermost being of the self, this experience can only be the feeling of the Ānanda-Śakti inhering in Ciṭ, which is the heart of Reality ‘Hridayaṃ Parameshi tu’. The term ‘Hridaya’ means heart signifying love-daliance, joy and bliss. “Anuttara Prathamakalā Akula - Svarūpā Pūrnāhantā Ānanda-Śakti Tasyame-vābisyantī”—(Tantrāloka). In other words, so long as the transcendent Parama Śiva remains in

inseparable union with His Integral Experience or Ānanda Śakti, there is yet no necessity of shinning forth, being all-perfect, 'Pūrnāhantā' in Himself. The Brihadāranyaka Upanisad says, "Just as a man when intensely embraced by his beloved wife knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within and remains identified in love-dalliance or blissful-ecstasy, there is no difference yet between the experiencer, experience and the experienced. In other words, there is not yet in the all comprehensive 'Integral Experience' of parama Śiva any externality. The Vimarsa-Śakti or irresistible free will-to-create remains one with Him in the form of an Ideal Universe. The Universe at this stage is an 'Idea' of the Absolute or an 'Absolute Idea'. But in order that there may be an ideal manifestation, there arises a 'stress' 'spanda' in the all-quiescent ocean of Absolute Consciousness. As a result there is a dim feeling of disitnction in Parama-Śiva as His Ānanda-Śakti out of the fulness of joy within is about to shine forth. This feeling of distinction generates the feeling of want of objective manifestation. Without this feeling or spandana or stress, the manifested Universe could not have come into existence. The experience of this stage is the experience of the transcendent as well as the immanent aspect of 'Samvit' or Absolute Cīṭ or Consciousness. This is the Śiva-Tattva which emerges out of Parama-Śiva or Parā-Cīṭ without in any way being affected in His own transcendent aspect. This is the first person singular number 'I' which, can not be generalised, devoid of any feeling or thought like, 'I am' ; for the verb 'to be' implies change in time, a relation such as 'I and this', 'I am here', 'I am something'. This is the pure 'I' 'Parichhinna-Nirvikalpa-Cīṭ'. Hence Śiva-Tattva may be called

the pure 'I', free from any vikalpa or determination. This is the first potential flutter of shinning forth which is the ground and goal of the evolutionary process. This principle of 'I-ness', 'Ahantā' when considered per se in Śiva-tattva is Śiva the innermost self, the pure Being penetrating the process of 'becoming'. It is the self-existent Consciousness 'Saṭ-Svarupa' which is the pre-supposition of self-consciousness. Thus the potential moment of manifestation of the Absolute Consciousness is Śiva. It is to be noted here that there is not any time-interval in the evolutionary process which is an eternal continuum ; for according to non-dualistic Śaiva-Śākta philosophy, Śiva and Śakti, Being and Becoming are eternally inseparable. Even at the time of Universal dissolution, they remain identified with each other. In the Absolute Light of Pure Consciousness, 'Parā Samvit' or Parā-Ciṭ in the form and potency of all becoming or Universal manifestation remains in subtlest potentiality in union with Parama-Śiva. Śiva is the static indeterminate and Śakti is its kinetic aspect. In other words, the Absolute Light of Pure Consciousness by the spontaneous operation of its own intrinsic dynamism polarises itself into 'I-this' 'Ahaṃ-Idaṃ' "Siva-Śakti", the positive negative of the Śiva Śakti Tattva, Śiva representing the Prakāśa and Śakti 'Vimarsa' aspects respectively. The Śiva Tattva is Prakāśa mātra, that is the pure 'I' with a stress. This is the stage in which the 'I' Aham and 'This' Idam exist in undistinguishable Union. It is the one supreme I-Consciousness, 'Aham-pratitī' which is the root of all limited subjectivity. This is borne out, when we analyse experience. The 'I-side' of experience is that in which the self is purely self-luminous without looking towards another "Ananyomukha Ahaṃ

Pratyah", while the 'Idam' or this vimarsa of experience looks towards another. The former is the illuminating 'Prakāśa', knowing aspect or Jñāna aspect and the latter Vimarsa or the known or the experienced. From this, it follows that Śiva tattva is the first stage of the creative movement of the Unmanifest. Thus Śiva tattva is the First vibratory movement or stress towards manifestation and Śakti Tattva is what freely regulates, guides, controls Śiva's onward march as the principle of negation or polarisation.

The self-luminous, self-conscious, trans-empirical experience Śiva-Śakti-Tattva then Shines forth into the Sadā-Śiva tattva. This is the beginning of the experience of 'I-am-this'. The 'this' 'Idam' is indistinctly and indefinitely perceived by the 'I' 'Aham' as part of the 'I', the emphasis being on the 'I-side' of experience. At this stage the Ideal universe 'Sṛisti-Kalpanā' of Śiva shines forth, as the first stress of experiencing out or shining forth into something vague and indistinct in the subliminal depth the pure light of Absolute Consciousness (Saṭ-Ciṭ). This stage may be compared to the stage of one who just awakens from a stage of perfectly dreamless sound sleep, having an indeterminate, indefinable feeling of something outside. In this stage, the experience of 'Ideal Universe' is very dimly realized like the faint, indistinct memory of a long forgotten music beginning to rise from beneath the innermost depth of consciousness to the surface but is still in a subtle form lying deeper in it. It is thus the stage in which the volitional aspect or irresistible free-will of self-manifestation is the dominant feature, when the Jñāna-Śakti or the power of knowing pure and simple

without any reference to emotional feeling and will, Kriyā-Śakti or the power of creation are held in suspense. This irresistible free will in Parama-Śiva is constitutive of the feeling which may be described as 'Divine Wonder' as to 'what to do', of 'Divine Resolve' as to, 'what is to be done' and as such is prior to any actual movement. In this stage the 'Ichhā' aspect or irresistible free will is just awakened, a necessary prior step to initiate evolution. It follows from this that Sadā-Śiva-Tattva constitutes the initial step in the process of universal manifestation. This step has been called in Tantra Philosophy 'Unmesha' or opening of the eyes of Parama-Śiva or the volitional stage in trans-empirical Consciousness. In Vaishnava Tantra, the Sadā-Śiva-Tattva has been called the Mahā-Vishṇu and in the Buddhistic Tantra it has been called 'Avalokitesvara' or one who shines forth in His compassion or out of fulness of joy within.

In the unfolding, unrolling process of Universal becoming or Evolution, the next Tattva which is manifested is 'Iśvara-Tattva'. The Sadā-Śiva Tattva in which the irresistible free will-power is the dominant feature manifests itself in Iśvara-Tattva. In other words, the Divine Experiencer as a Being with irresistible free will shines forth in the form of 'This-is-I', Idam-Ahaṃ, The 'I-this' (Ahaṃ-Idam) of Sadā-Śiva Tattva evolves into 'this-I' 'Idam-Ahaṃ-Tattva' or 'Iśvara Tattva'. In the 'Sadā-Śiva-Tattva', the emphasis is on the 'Ahaṃ' or the self or 'I'. In the Iśvara-Tattva the emphasis is on the 'Idam'. In other words, the 'Ideal Universe' is externally projected as a 'this'. The Universe as a grand 'Idea' which is indistinctly and dimly present in Sadā-Śiva Tattva becomes

more and more pronounced in the experience of 'this', that is, gradually unfolds itself into the 'What' of experience. 'The whole universe is within me'. This is the Tattva in which Iśvara or God realizes what constitutes his lordliness as His glory as a Divine Being. In this stage the objective Universe is experienced by the 'I' or the self distinctly and yet as an Integral part of Himself. 'Sarvaṃ mamāyaṃ bibhāvāh'.

The next Tattva which follows is 'Śuddha-Vidyā Tattva' or the 'Sad-Vidyā-Tattva'. In Siva-Tattva, the pure Light of Absolute Consciousness, Parā-Ciṭ manifests itself to itself as the 'I-experience' (Ahaṃ-Vimarsa), in the Sadā-Siva Tattva, the same consciousness manifests as the 'I-this-experience' (Ahaṃ-Idaṃ-Vimarsa). In the first stage, the 'I' is realized as the innermost self, an unchanging Reality of the nature of a pure experiencing principle as distinguished from either the experienced or the means of experience. In this stage, there is exclusive emphasis on the self or the 'I', in the second stage, the emphasis is, no doubt, upon the 'I' or 'Ahaṃ' yet there is the predominance of will power, the 'this' or 'Idaṃ' is manifested as an Integral part of the 'I'. In the third stage, the emphasis is on the 'this' (Idaṃ), though the 'this' is manifested as an 'Idaṃ' in the self or the 'I'. In this stage the 'I'-side gradually vanishes into the background. In the Saṭ Vidyā Tattva there is an equilibrium of the 'I' or 'Ahaṃ' and 'this' or Idaṃ Sāmādhikaranya, there is equal emphasis on both the aspects. They are known as the subject and the object of experience as forming one whole. This point may be illustrated by reference to our daily experience. In our daily life, our

thought, feelings and volitions are identified with our 'I-consciousness' and yet we distinguish these as belonging to the self. Thus there is an equalization, harmonisation of both the terms of experience, the 'I' and the 'this' forming a synthesis (Adhikāraṇya) and not on two different bases. In this stage of experience of the 'One' as being possessed by the 'another,' there arises for the first time what may be called the experience of diversity in Unity, 'Bhedā-veda Tattva' or as it has been called 'Parāparadaśā' 'Vedā-veda Vimarsātmaka' 'Sad-Vidyā'. It is spoken of as the experience of unity in diversity as in the form of mantra. In this experience there is a distinction between the Idam or this manifesting itself as belonging to the 'I' or Ahaṃ. There is distinction but not separation. It is to be noted here that the 'I' or the self at this stage feels that 'All-this' is yet something in Him as being really nothing else than his own experience. It is evident that in the 'Suddha-Vidyā Tattva,' there is the manifestation of the Kriyā-Śakti, there is thus some movement, some inward urge in Absolute thought for polarization not yet externally realised. It is evident that all the above five stages constitute the pure order of being, that is, they are in the realm of pure spiritual order. Here both transcendent and immanent aspects of the all-comprehensive supreme Saṭ Cīṭ or Consciousness form one spiritual order. All the above 'Tattvas' i.e., fundamental metaphysical principles, viz., Śiva-Tattva, Śakti-Tattva, Sadā-Śiva-Tattva, Iśvara-Tattva and Suddha-Vivṛyā-Tattva, form one Integral experience in the supreme Light of Absolute Consciousness. As there is no bifurcation yet, there is no distinction, the diversity is in the whole. This pure order forms the

potential state of Universal manifestation. This is the germinal stage. In the language of Spinoza, it comprises the vision of world as an unity in its pure form, 'Sub-specie aeternitatis'. In Śaiva-Sākta Philosophy the Absolute Light of Pure Consciousness has two aspects, (a) Static or pure 'Being-Consciousness', 'Saṭ-Ciṭ', in which state it is self-luminous i.e., it is merely an abstract illumination where there is nothing to illumine, (b) it is also self-conscious which is its own Vimarsha-aspect, self-luminosity and self-consciousness are inseparable. There is an attempt here to synthesise and reconcile the 'Logos' which is alogical and matter which is the 'hyle'. Thus Śiva is the pure Self and Śakti or power is the self's own consciousness. Though Parā-Samviṭ or the Supreme Light of Absolute Consciousness represents the changeless aspect, yet it is not opposed to change as potentiality is not opposed to the kinetic. Thus the primary aspect which is manifested in the Absolute 'Light of Pure-Consciousness' is purely an ideal one. The Śiva-Tattva, Śakti-Tattva, Sadā-Śiva Tattva, Íśwara-Tattva and Śuddha-Vidyā Tattva form the pure ideal state of the Absolute Experiencing principle. This is the Ideal or spiritual order.

Out of this Ideal order, the manifestation of the limited finite order emerges. Hence such manifestation is called 'Asuddha-Vidyā', that is, the manifestation of the imperfect order or the Mayā-Śakti. Its function is to obscure, to determine the all-comprehensive Experience. This is the principle of particularization inherent in a very subtle form in the 'Absolute Light of Pure Consciousness'. On account of this Mayā Śakti, the material, vital and psychical forms emerge out of the womb of the formless

‘Consciousness’. Under the influence of this ‘Veil of Neiscience’, or the self’s own obscurating principle, the ‘All-Comprehensive Integral Experience’ identifies itself with the ‘Idam’ or ‘this’ or this-side of the same Integral Experience which is its objective counterpart subjectively viewed. Māyā ‘indicates the sense of difference in all individual selves and objects. Just as the surging waves hold in the sea, so Māyā obscures the true nature of the self which but for its influence would otherwise remain unknown and unknowable “Māyā Vibhedabudhirnijāṇsa Jatesu Nikhilavaibhāvesu Nityaṃ Tasya Nirankusavibhāvam Veleva-bāribhi run-dhe”! (Tattva-Sandoho. Chap. - V.) In the ‘Isvara-pratyavijñā’, ‘Māyā’ has been spoken of as ‘that which is nothing but the notion of difference in things entertained by the Self who in his true nature is pure undifferentiated Ciṭ or Consciousness. Thus subjectively, Māyā is the principle which polarizes itself into the subject and object in jñāna or knowledge. Viewed as the magnificent macrocosmic Power, it is the intrinsic power of becoming in the changeless Absolute Consciousness which projects out the dynamic flow of psychical, vital and physical forms. In its subtlest form, it is a stress in ‘Life-Divine’ having the inherent tendency to shine forth into the objective order which is the Universe. As Ciṭ-Sakti, or Conscious Power it is the germ and potency of the pure or spiritual order of Being or Suddha Vidayā-Tattva, as Māyā-Sakti it is the grosser aspect of spirit which is the materia prima or ‘Magnum Materium’. Matter thus, according to Śaiva-Śākta philosophy is obscured spirit and the act of obscuration is effectuated by the self’s own intrinsic power of self-obscuration which is Māyā Śakti.

It has already been pointed out that in the spiritual level of 'Śuddha-Vidyā', that is, in the level of pure experience, the germ of diversity remains as subtle potential power and thus the 'All this', 'Sarvaṃ-Idaṃ' is nothing but the Absolute. This is the 'Sarvaṃ-Khalidam-Brahma' or the pure Being-consciousness. In this stage, the self realizes itself as the indwelling, informing, all-pervading principle in all this, it is co-eval with 'All-this'. But under the influence of Māyā, Being-consciousness becomes the becoming-consciousness. In this stage change is effectuated in the all-comprehensive Integral Experience who experiences 'Time-Power, 'Kāla śakti' emerging out of Māyā. This is known as Kāla-Śakti or Time-power, for everything, every event, is manifested in and through Time. In the second place, the omnipresence, all-pervasiveness of the 'All-this-is-mine' of the Śuddha-Vidyā Tattva becomes restricted to limited space and has the experience of restricting, conditional cause, sequence and the like. Thus omnipresence of the Being-consciousness which transcends all space is veiled. This is known as 'Niyati' or the power of Māyā-Śakti which makes the all pervading, 'Śuddha-Vidyā' to experience spatial and temporal relation. In other words, omnipresence is felt as limited, the 'Eternal' becomes the temporal. In the third place, the Self which is the all-perfect principle, in which there is no feeling of want or limitation, because there is nothing outside of it, feels or knows itself as being attached to something in particular and outside itself. The feeling of all-perfection or self-fulfilment which is known as 'Purnāhantā' is transformed into restless discontent according as interest in one particular object moves on to another thing. This is technically known as 'Rāga' which means

attachment to this or that object. In the fourth place, the all-comprehensive Experience feels itself as polarised into distinct principles of subject and object i.e., 'vedabuddhi' or the knowledge of differentiation between the self and the object appears, i.e., when the Omniscient is manifested in knowledge which is nothing but limited consciousness, there is the emergence of Vidyā out of Māyā-śakti which limits all-knowing power of the Absolute Consciousness, parama-Śiva and thus Śiva or the Supreme Self cognises itself as Jiva or the empirical self having limited knowledge and lastly the supreme power of irresistible free will in the Self becomes limited by 'Kalā-Śakti, which means irresistible free power of acting without hindrance 'Sarvakartrittva' becomes restricted action. Thus Māyā Śakti is manifested in five kinds of limiting forms technically called the five 'Kancukas' or five limiting powers namely Kāla, Niyati, Rāga, Vidyā and Kalā. The term 'Kanchuka' literally means limiting power. Thus Māyā Śakti is constitutive of five veiling powers without which the universe of individual persons and objects would never have come into existence. The Self thus obscures Himself by his own power of self-obscuration, His Divine state and glory by His own self-abnegating power, projects itself out there into the world of matter, life and mind. In other words, changelessness becomes change, 'Being' becomes becoming. The perennial problem of philosophy viz., 'how the One becomes many' has been beautifully solved in Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy. The objective order of the Universe is nothing but the manifestation of the Ideal or spiritual order. It is evident that Māyā Śakti remains latent in the subtlest form of potential creative energy in the Saṭ-Ciṭ or pure Light of Absolute

Consciousness. Out of 'Māyā-Śakti', Kāla-Śakti emerges and the universe is manifested through Time-power (Kāla-Śakti). Time being the principle of manifestation, the 'conditio sine quibus non' of all manifestation can not be identified with any created or manifested object. Just as a shadow manifests itself in a mirror similarly, it is in the mirror of 'Time' that this universe is manifested. The mirror reveals the unity as well as the distinction between reflection and the Reality reflected, similarly 'Time-power' is the mirror which manifests the all comprehensive 'Integral Experience', Śiva and the Universe. According to Āgama Siddhānta 'Time' is not an abstract concept, neither mere change as the great French Philosopher, Henry Bergson supposed. Time is the great omnipotent power, the root cause of all manifestation, viz., creation. The Śuddha Vidyā Tattva or the fundamental principle of the Ideal order is projected out there into the universe of individual persons and objects by time-power, 'Kāla-Śakti'. It is a fact of experience, that ideation is prior to experience of objects, in other words ideal order of existence is prior to the factual order of existence. If I ask a weaver engaged in his work of weaving, 'what are you doing?'—in reply, he says, "I am weaving cloth," really speaking, so long as he does not finish his work of weaving there is no cloth. The question is 'where is this finished cloth?' It is not yet out there as an actual cloth, but it is a fact that the cloth exists in the ideation of the weaver. Thus the statement, 'I am weaving cloth', means I am actualising what is already there ideally. In this sense 'Time' is the agency through which the ideal order of reality is manifested in the objective order. Objectively viewed 'Time' is the Macrocosmic power or Śakti in which all other cosmic forces lie hidden. Hence every

particular event or object is a moment in Eternal Time. It is evident that when the 'Vimarsa Śakti' or the subtlest potency of irresistible free will-to-create remains one with the 'Absolute Consciousness', time is not yet manifested and therefore there is no manifestation, but as according to Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy, creation is an eternal process, in the language of Dr. Alexander "Space-Time continuum", the inner dynamism or Vimarsa-Śakti appears as 'Time-power'. When Time-power is actuated by will-power Ichha Śakti, there is a stress or "Spandana" the first vibratory impulse to creation and this is Cosmic Life, the 'Elan Vital'. This is the Cosmic life permeating the universe of living beings individualised in all forms of organisms from the genes, protoplasmic cell to self-conscious living individual persons. 'Time-power' is 'Kārya-bivāvinī', the motive power behind 'Ichha-Śakti', or the irresistible free-will-to-creation involved in the Absolute Self. Subjectively viewed with reference to individual persons who are subject to the five veiling powers of Māyā Śakti viz., Kālā, Niyati or the merits and demerits of actions, Rāga or attachment, Vidyā or limiting condition of knowledge and Kalā or the restricting power by which the 'Sarvakarttva, omnipotent power of the Lord becomes restricted action. It comprises the stage of bondage. Thus all-knowing, all-perfect, omnipotent, omniscient Śiva or the Self becomes Jiva or the finite empirical self. The most important point to be noted here, is that Śiva or the transcendental Self and the Jiva or the empirical self are identical in essence, for it is the same self in his own self-oblivious condition, that is, Jiva. In his awakened condition it is Śiva 'pratyagātṁā', or 'Prabhudātṁā. Sleep

and awakening are two stages of one and the same self, the Jiva is Śiva awakened and Śiva is Jiva in sleeping, slumbering state.

(iii) The emergence of the empirical or the gross order of existence.

It has already been shown that the Tattvas or the basic metaphysical principles have been classified under three heads in Śaiva-Śākta philosophy. (a) The Tattva of the pure order of Being, technically called 'Śuddha-Vidyā Tattva' which is constitutive of (a) Śiva Tattva (b) Śakti-Tattva, (c) Śādā-Śiva Tattva (d) Iśwara Tattva, (e) Sad-Vidya Tattva. (ii) The mixed order of being or the Suddhā-Suddha Tattva or Māyā-Tattva which is constitutive of (a) Kāla Tattva, (b) Niyati Tattva, (c) Vidyā Tattva, (d) Rāga Tattva, (e) Kalā Tattva. The Abhasa process, already explained in the previous chapter, describes the way; how the 'One' shines forth into the many. 'Parā-Samviṭ' or the pure Light of Absolute Consciousness is not an abstract principle but a concrete dynamic spiritual principle ever in association with His own intrinsic dynamism which acts as the 'Nisus' of blossoming forth into the Universe of manifold objects. Though the Absolute shines forth into the infinite variety, it remains in its pristine identity in essence ; just as one light lightens up hundreds of lights and yet remains as the inexhaustible fountain of all lights. In the pure order of Universal manifestation which constitutes the first flutter of vibratory impulse to create in Absolute Consciousness, the spiritual aspect predominates ; in the mixed order of manifestation, the tendency towards limitation,

individuation, finitude and bondage shines forth not yet actualised. In the last and final stage, the Pure Light of Absolute Consciousness falls into sleep, as it were, by His own self-limiting power namely Māyā Śakti, and evolves into the world of empirical order of beings, which constitutes the following states :-

(a) The Purusa Tattva.—In this stage the Universal all-perfect 'I' or the Self becomes the empirical or the individual self. Here the Supreme Self or the Experiencer, experiences Himself as an endless number of individual selves or Purusas. Just as out of flaming fire innumerable sparks gush out ; similarly the plurality of selves shines forth out of the one supreme Self. All this is due to the operation of Māyā Śakti with Her five delimiting powers. Māyā, here, has been conceived as the self-limiting power of the Absolute without which there would have been no creation, no self-manifestation. This is on account of Māyā Śakti, the individual empirical selves know themselves as mutually exclusive entities. Māyā-Śakti has also been described as the differentiating principle by which the material objects including atoms, electrons etc., organisms and physical object are regarded as separate and different from one another. Thus 'Purusa Tattva' is not merely confined to man alone, but is also applicable to every individual or particular thing. That which ever abides as the Pure Light of Consciousness becomes matter, life and mind in all their multifarious forms and kinds which are in their essence the same Self or Pure Light of Consciousness obscured and particularised in different degrees. Matter, life and mind do not differ in kind but according to the different degrees of self-limiting



self-obscurating power of the Supreme Self or Parāciṭ. They are the same self in essence in different degrees of manifestation. Thus every particular object in the Universe is 'purusa', e.g., an atom is a purusa identified with solidity. Hence the Purusas have been described as 'Anu' or atomic in character 'Purnattābhāvena Parimitattvāṭ Anuttvaṃ'. In other words, every person, every particular thing, being a centre of force cannot have any dimension, as individual Unit or centre of force or power they pervade the entire Universe. (b) The Prakriti Tattva and the gunas in Śaiva Śākta Philosophy, constitute the form and potency of all evolutes both in the form of experience as well as in the form of the experienced. Prakriti is the indefinite objectivity which becomes manifest in particular objects. Thus Purusa and Prakriti are simultaneously manifested and are inseparable, for without the 'Experienced' or the objective order, the experience of the empirical self or Purusa in the form of pleasure and pain, enjoyment and contemplation becomes meaningless. It is evident that Purusa and Prakriti are nothing but the two poles of one and the same contracted, obscured and delimited manifestation of the Universal 'Ahaṃ' and the Universal 'Idaṃ' aspects respectively of the Śuddha Vidyā Tattva of 'Parameśwara' or the Pure Light of Absolute Consciousness. Purusa and Prakriti are simultaneous manifestations of the Universal 'I' or the self and the Universal 'this' which together constitute the objective order of manifestation. The Purusa is the contracted form of the 'All-Experiencer', 'Ahantā' obscured by His own Māyā-Śakti and Prakriti is the same Universal, 'This' 'Idanta' is the form of indefinite objectivity. Further as the purusas or empirical selves are many because of the self's

multiplying power of Māyā Śakti ; similarly Prakriti is manifested in the innumerable objects of experience. 'All this' is perceived by the different purusas as the many ; as different persons perceive the same Moon in so many different reflections in different portions of the Sea, while the Sea remains one identical whole. In other words, prakriti is the delimited contracted form of 'Sarvaṃ Idam,' or Universal 'all this' appearing simultaneously with 'Purusa' or individualised empirical selves for their enjoyment and contemplation. Just as by virtue of His own Māyā Śakti the self delimits and manifests itself in and through an infinite number of empirical selves, similarly it is the same self which manifests itself in the form of 'Sarvaṃ-Idam'. 'Ahantā' and 'Idantā' 'I' and 'this', the knower and the known forming the two poles of the same all-comprehensive 'Integral Experience'. It is worthy of mentioning here that according to Sāṅkhya Philosophy 'Purusa' is regarded as the 'Supreme Reality' which is Self-luminous and beyond which there is nothing but in Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy the Purusa Tattva is but a grosser manifestation of 'Parama Śiva'. 'Purusa' is the obscured and individualised 'Śiva' by His own Māyā Śakti. Further Prakriti, in Sankhya Philosophy, is one for all the Purusas but according to Śaiva Śākta philosophy there are innumerable 'Prakritis' as there are individual Purusas. The Purusas in the Trika System are just like Leibnitzian 'monads' each an isolated mirror reflecting or perceiving the whole Universe in its own way. Further, the Sāṅkhya Philosophy posits a plurality of Purusas or empirical selves in opposition to one non-conscious 'Prakriti' but in Śaiva Śākta Philosophy, Prakriti is neither a non-conscious independent principle nor opposed to the Supreme

Self. Purusa-Prakriti, constitutes the form and potency of all gross subjective and objective manifestations respectively. The dualism as well as duality of 'Purusa' and 'Prakriti' is thus reconciled, harmonised and explained as being manifestations of one and the same ultimate Reality. Such a view is in conformity with the Sruti "All this is verily Brahma", "Creation is an experiencing out or shinning forth of the Supreme Consciousness out of fulness of joy within", Prakriti is the same Ciṭ-Sakti of Paramesvara or the Supreme Lord obscuring and multiplying itself with His own Māyā Śakti. Self-limitation is no limitation at all. Prakriti is called the experience of 'all this', the basis of all sentience. The Tantra-Sāra says, 'Tadeva Prakriti-tattvaṃ tu Bhogyasāmānyam' (Tantra-Sara, an. 8). Further the experience of Prakriti or 'Bhogyasāmānyam' which is sentience in Purusa being a state of equipoise, there can be no specific, distinct feeling. In other words, Prakriti Tattva being the equilibrium of all affecting sentience is the presentation of a vague, indefinite 'Something' in which all the distinct features of the infinite contents of the Universal, 'All this' are in their subtlest forms. There can be nothing which can generate in the Purusa or subject self any such specific feeling such as 'sukha', or pleasure, 'dukha' or pain, 'moha' or delusion. The feeling of pleasure, pain and delusion are produced by the gunas of Prakriti which are called in Sanskrit the 'Sattva', 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'. When they are in a state of equilibrium, there is the general feeling of a vague indefinite something which is the Prakriti Tattva. It is to be noted here that the term 'Guna' does not mean any attribute or quality, they are the constitutive elements of Prakriti Tattva. Prakriti then

differentiates into the grosser Tattvas of Buddhi or intellect, Aham-kāra or egoism and Manas or mind. The third or the material stage of the evolution of prakṛiti commences with the emergence of 'Antaḥkarana' which is constitutive of mind, Ahamkarā' or ego sense and Buddhi or intellect. An analysis of the psychical process technically called 'Antaḥkarana' in its three distinct phases will not be out of place here. When we say, we apprehend something or perceive something as 'this' or 'that', a very complicated process is involved, though we may not be distinctly conscious of it. The following stages clearly indicate the various phases of our knowing or perceiving a thing. In the first place, our senses come in contact with an external stimulus awakening sensation technically called 'Alocana'. Now what is presented by senses is a mere manifold. The senses must have the co-operation of something before they can act at all. There may be the whole Universe of objects acting upon the senses, yet there can be no sensation, if there be not the operation of the mind. Thus mind of Manaḥ is the factor which emerges simultaneously with the presentation of the manifold of sense. The function of Manaḥ is selecting a certain group to the exclusion of others out of the chaotic flux of the 'manifold of sense' with a view to curving out a particular image. In the 'Tantrāloka' the function of Manaḥ is described as 'Vyābhedā' i.e., to divide or to select. Vacāspati Miśra also speaks of the function of Manaḥ as 'Vyābhedā Manaḥ Lakasyati', thus e.g., when I stand on a green meadow ; I am affected by sensations of all kinds around by the beautiful scenery, the blue sky, the green colour, the singing bird, the fragrant air etc.



But if I am asked, 'bring me the cow', I have to select out of the manifold of sense affecting me from all sides only those pertaining to the cow with a view to curve out the single image of a cow out of the selected group of sensations. This function of image-making, of course, does not enable me to point out the real cow out there, for an image is not the real cow. In order to transform the image, it must be perceived as a solid living object. These primary and secondary qualities such as solidity, extension, colour etc. are supplied by memory, called past personal experience of a particular cow. This personal experience is in me, i.e., something of myself. For it is not possible to think of or to speak of the present object as a particular cow, unless I feel it something as part of myself. This is the process of mental assimilation (Anusandhāna). But this is not all. There must be reference of this particular 'Cow-image' to the species 'Cow', before I am able to say that this particular object is a particular cow belonging to the species called 'Cow.' The question, 'whence do I derive the idea of the species, cow'? There must therefore be a 'standard of reference' which is beyond the experience of a particular cow. This reference to a standard is in our experience of or thinking of or speaking of an object as 'this is a cow'. All the above phases of experience are in one word called 'Antaḥ-karaṇa'. In the language of Kant 'It is the process of assimilation, co-ordination, synthesis by means of which we perceive object.' The next Tattva which evolves is 'Ahaṁkāra' or the egosense. It is the store-house of experiences in the form of memory and through the agency of which our present experiences are assimilated with the past experiences with a sense of personal identity.

Ahaṃkāra is thus the Tattva which is super-imposed by the personal 'I' upon the impersonal parama-Śiva or the Supreme Self. In other words, it is the egosense of the supreme self veiling itself. In the Tantra Sāra, it has been said "Ahaṃkāra Yena Buddhi-pratibimbite Bhedyasaprake .Kaluse Pumprakāse Atmani Suktam Rajatabhimanavaṭ, Ataevā-Kāra Ityanena Kritakattvaṃ Ahyuktaṃ. Sāmkhyasya tu tannajuṇyate, Sa hi na atmānaḥ ahaṃ Vimarsa Mayātamichativayaṃ tu Katritāvam iti tasya Ichamaḥ, Taccha Suddhaṃ Vimarsa eva camaṭkāra ruṇaḥ ahaṃiti." Lastly, Buddhi, or intellect being the supplier of that standard of reference which is not given in experience but which is the indispensable condition for the formation of judgement emerges out of the tattva through which concrete experiences are taken up for such reference and comparison. It may thus be spoken of as the super-personal state of consciousness in a limited self. Hence in the 'Trika system' Buddhi or Intellect is spoken of as the memory of Suddha-Vidyā experience in a limited form. Buddhi may thus be compared with the sublimated or subconscious self. From Buddhi 'Ahaṃkāra Tattva' emerges in which there is the realization of the experiencer as a particular, individual person. In other words, it is the self same sub-conscious or non-conscious impersonal self manifested as the personal self in which there is the experience of 'I am so and so', 'I am this body', 'I am the sum total of cognition, conation and volition'. Thus it is this 'Ahaṃkāra Tattva' which holds together the ingredients of 'Nāmaruṇas', names and forms making up a personal being and lastly as explained before, from Ahaṃkāra, the Manas Tattva is manifested. The function of Manas is the construction

of images out of the manifold of sense-impressions. It is the gross manifestation of the personal self as embodied. As the 'Tattva-Sandoha' says, 'Tasya Kriyā tamomaya murtih Manas ucyate vikalpakāro'. It is to be specially noted here that out of Manaṣ other groups of Tattvas are manifested generally called 'Indriyas'. The Indriyas, in Śaiva-Sākta Philosophy, not only means the physical organs namely the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue and the skin and the so called muscular sense and bodily organs of action, but also those powers of 'Purusa-Tattva' as endowed with and manifesting these faculties which exhibit themselves as operating through those physical organs. The Tantrik Ācaryas consider the 'All-This' Experience or Integral-Experience of Parama-Śiva as consisting of a number of Bhubanas or planes of matter, life and mind made up of Tattvas. Thirtysix Tattvas are recognized out of which twentyfive Tattvas constitute the 'Asuddha' Tattvas namely the gross aspects they are (1) The earth technically called the Pṛithivī or Dhāra-Tattva, (2) Water or Apaḥ or the principle of liquidity, (3) Fire technically called Tejas, (4) Air or Vāyu, (5) Akāśa or ether. These five metaphysical principles are collectively called the 'Pancabhutas' or the five gross principles, (6) Gandha-Tanmātrā or the principle generating smell, (7) Rasa Tanmātrā or the principle of Salivation, (8) Rupa-Tanmātrā or the principle of form, (9) Sparsa-Tanmātrā or the principle which generates feeling, (10) Sabda Tanmātrā or the principle which generates Sound. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 constitute what is technically known as 'Pancha-Tanmātrā', out of the five 'Karmendriyas' or five faculties of activities are manifested namely, (11) The generative organ or the Upastha,

(12) The Evacuating organ called Payu, (13) The organ of moving called Pāda, (14) The organ of holding called Pañi, (15) The vocal organ called Vāk. Out of these the five 'jñānendriyas' or the five faculties of sense-perception are manifested, (16) The organ of smell called Ghanendriya made up of Gandhya Tanmātrā, (17) The 'Rasanendriya' or the organ of taste made up of 'Rasa-Tanmātrā', (18) 'Darśanendriya' or the organ of sight, (19) Sparsa-Indriya or the sense of touch made up of Sparsatanmātrā, (20) Śravanendriya or the organ of hearing made up of 'Śabdatanmātrā'. Sixteen to Twentieth Tattvas are collectively called the faculties of sense perception. (21) Out of all these Tattvas, the Manas or the mind is manifested which is the faculty of Image-making, (22) The Ahamkāra or the ego-sense, the individual ego is manifested such as Rama, Shyama etc., (23) Then Buddhi-Tattva or the faculty of judging or interpreting, of co-ordinating, assimilating the manifold of sense-perception emerges; Mind, Buddi or understanding and Ego-sense. These three faculties are collectively called Antahkarana, (24) Next the Purusa Tattva or the all-Experience appears with limited powers i.e., the universal appears as the individual, (25) Next manifestation is Prakriti Tattva. The equilibrium of the three gunas namely 'Sattva' which is the principle of manifestation, Rajas Guna the principle of all kinds of activities and the Tama Guna, the obscurating principle. This is Prakriti Tattva, the vague the indefinite 'All this' presented to the Purusa through the influence of Māyā-Tattva and as such prakriti Tattva is the root and foundation of all future experience. It is evident that from the Prithvi Tattva down to Prakriti Tattva we have twentyfive Tattva forming the impure of

Aśuddha Tattva or impure or empirical order of being. The second order of being or Tattva which belongs to the pure-impure order has been technically called Suddhā-Suddha Tattva. This comprises the Māyā Tattva with Her six limiting powers, such as (a) Kāla or the limited creative power of 'All-this' Experiencer in the individual. (b) Kalā or limited omniscience of the Universal Experiencer in the individual. (c) Vidyā i.e., omniscience becomes manifested in knowledge which is nothing but limited consciousness. (d) Rāga or attachment of the individualised universal to something in particular. (e) Niyati or the principle or delimited all-comprehensiveness. Thus the Māyā Tattva or the self-obscurating power of Parama-Śiva acts as a veil upon His omnipotence, omniscience, all perfection, eternity and unrestricted freedom. The Universal Self as enveloped by Māyā with Her five delimiting powers or Śakṭis appears as Purusa or the empirical self with delimited action, knowledge, contentment and as a temporal mortal being with restricted freedom. (a) The first order of being or Śuddha-Vidyā-Tattva as explained above, comprises the Śiva-Tattva or the pure 'I' devoid of any feeling of outwardness of 'I am'. (b) Śiva-Tattva is Sat-Ciṭ in which the Virmarsa-Śakti just awakens in the form of not only self-luminous but also self conscious principle. (c) Śakti Tattva, it has already been said, is the negative aspect of the same 'Śiva-Tattva' that is the static aspect of Śiva is made kinetic by His own intrinsic dynamism which is Śakṭi Tattva. It is the immanent aspect of the first flutter of shining forth in Śiva-Tatva. (d) The Sadā-Śiva Tattva or the principle of being that is, 'That' from which or in which the experience of being belongs. (e) Īśvara-Tattva or the Tattva which constitutes the

feeling of ordliness and glory in the Divine Being. According to Utpalācārya due to the emergence of 'Kriya-Śakti' or outgoing movement of the Pure self, the Absolute emerges as Iswara. 'Udriktakriyāsaktirīśvaraḥ'.

CHAPTER—IX

The Absolute or Para-Sambit

Both Śaiva and Śākta Philosophy begin with an enquiry into the nature of the ultimate Reality. This is so, because Philosophy, worth the name, is an attempt to probe deeper into the nature of ultimate Reality manifested in a variety of forms and names. It must try to interpret and explain the One in relation to life and its multifarious experiences. Philosophy becomes meaningful when it understands, interprets and comprehends properly the objective facts and circumstances in relation to human existence and the Supreme values of life. This is no wonder, then that the constructive philosophy of Tantra will begin with a quest for the Eternal and the Infinite in a world of objective facts comprehending the knower and the known, the enjoyer and the enjoyed. It is not merely an intellectual pastime weaving cobwebs of theories and 'isms' detached from living experience. The great seers of old not only thought of the wonders of life and existence but also worked hard following the path of Yoga and Tapas for the emancipation of mankind from bondage to suffering. They practised self-control and spiritual acts of meditation, worship etc. to attain the Summum Bonum of life, namely self-realization. Hence it has both a theoretical and practical interest. Its aim is to awaken

humanity from its sleeping slumbering state of self-luminous Intelligence which in Tantra Śāstra is called 'Pratyavijñā'. The individual or Jiva is no other than the Self or Śiva conditioned, limited by his own self-limiting power or Māyā-Śakti.

In Tantra Philosophy, the ultimate Reality has been variously called as 'Anuttara', 'Ciṭ' Caitanya, Purnāhanta, Parā-Sambhṭ, Parama-Śiva and Ātman or Self. In English or any other vocabulary there is no such term which can fully express the meaning of all these words. Further the term 'consciousness' as used in Western Psychology and philosophy does not convey the true import of 'Self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence' which is Ciṭ-Svarupa or the Absolute of Tantra. The Absolute or the Parama-Śiva is the supreme Reality of the Universe, the Light that pervades everything, the Life that permeates everything, the Reality of all that is real ; as such it is originally Universal, all-pervading, all-comprehending and yet all-transcending ultimate Reality. It is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. In the Rig-Veda it has been called 'Rita-Ciṭ' the underlying all-comprehensive Reality, the indwelling, informing principle of all. The Tantra Śāstra says Parā-Samvit or Parama-Śiva is the one identical principle in all, the same indivisible All-consciousness unconditioned by any of its particular modes, or manifestation. The Ciṭ-Svarupa is nothing particular and conditioned. It is self-luminous, i.e., it shines forth out of its own intrinsic life and light within. It is Infinite Light called Prakāśa with unrestricted free will called Vimarsa. This irresistible free will or 'Svātantra' constitutes its essence or intrinsic dynamism in inseparable

union with the Absolute. "Parāśaktirūpā citireva vāga-batī Śivavattārakābhinna". In other words, the Absolute Ciṭ or Self contains the universe in its womb as 'Amarsaparanādagarvāḥ'. There is yet no experience of time and space or of direction. It is free from all determination. It is one 'Integral Experience', 'pure essence' shorn of all dualism. This Parā-Sambit shines forth into the infinite variety of world-systems, not by the impact of any external necessity but out of the fulness of dynamic irresistible ecstatic bliss or 'Ānanda Śakti' which ever remains identified with it and is the first cause, Ādyāśakti, the primeval potential power of shining forth into the myriads of Universes from within its womb, yet remaining the same in its essence.

"Sreemat Paramaśivasya Punāḥ Viswottīrna Visvātmaka Paramānandamaya Prakāśaikaghanasya Akhilaṃ Avedenaiva Sphurati Na Tu Vastutaḥ Anyaḥ Kimciṭ Grahyaṃ Grāhakaṃ Vā (Pratyavijñahridaya)". Parama-Śiva or the Absolute is not a barren monistic abstraction nor negation of all that is. It is 'Integral self-conscious, self-luminous Experience or Intelligence. It illumines itself i.e., it is the self-illuminating principle. It is conscious of its own Intrinsic light even when there is nothing to illumine. This state of the Absolute has been called 'Ciṭ-Svarupa', the changeless principle of all changing experiences. This is the ultimate foundation of all 'Experiences' and the 'Experienced'. The logician may ask here 'what is the evidence of such unconditioned light of Consciousness'? Modern Psychology which deals with the changing states of experiences has no testimony for its existence. It may be said, however, that if we have

experience of the relative, we can transcend the relativity in the widest contest of the 'Absolute Integral Experience'. The Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy does not regard Cīṭ as a mere 'that' Cittavritti or function of the conscious or the subconscious, or the unconscious which are apparent circumscriptions or self-limitations of the 'One Saṭ', 'Ekam Saṭ' or the ultimate Reality without any name and form, devoid of any kind of determination or limitation or manifestation, a phase of mere tension which may at once start even when the slightest construction is put upon it resulting in the state of 'I-this' Consciousness. To the ordinary man, the pure Absolute 'Integral Experience' or 'Cīṭ-Svarupa' in which there is nothing particular to obtain or to avoid, to love or to hate, to be attached or to be detached, appears practically to be no experience at all ; but it may be pointed out that Pure Absolute consciousness is im-partial that is, not anything particular. There is in it no differentiation, it is the whole in which all partial or temporal expressions remain undifferentiated. It is 'Alogical', Absolute, Quiescent Consciousness, pure, undifferentiated unitary Experience with no special subjective direction, reference or interest, with no differences of level. In our everyday life, we crave for modes and forms, we are interested in what is limited. Pluralistic variety and polarity are necessary for enjoyment. Hence we form the habit of associating experience and existence with variety and change. We scheme over the surface of things, we do not like to penetrate deeper into the abysmal depth of Reality, we ignore the unfathomed depth where there is the Absolute quiescence which is the Supreme Bliss, 'Parānanda' and Supreme Peace, 'Śāntaṃ'. Ordinary human beings or the Jivas live on a fraction of the

great Bliss. Thus the Śaiva-Śākta Philosophy say that the Absolute is self-existent (Nirādhāra), eternal (Nitya), Unchanging (Avikārī), Undifferentiated (Abhinna), beyond space (Purna), beyond time (Sāsvāta), all-pervading (Sarvagata), self-luminous (Svayam Yoti), Pure Ciṭ. It is neither any experience nor the means of experience. It is, in short, the inner-most self in everything, of the nature of a purely Experiencing principle "Caityam Ātmā" (Sivasutra Vimarsinī). Samviṭ, Pure Integral Experience is the Highest Reality. The Absolute is of the nature of self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. This is the description of the Absolute or Parameśvara or Parā-Samviṭ in its pristine transcendence without the world being manifested within it either as an idea or experience or as an object. It is evident that according to, Tantra Philosophy the Ultimate Reality or the Supreme Light of Pure Consciousness, Parama-Śiva or Parā-Śakti or Parā-Ciṭ is not a logical abstraction. It is a concrete dynamic self-conscious, self-luminous, spiritual principle with its five fold powers namely (i) Ciṭ-Śakti or the pure light of Absolute Consciousness as it is in itself, (ii) Ānanda Śakti or the unlimited power of enjoying perfect Bliss, because such Bliss is independent of any need for any outward object and means, therefore ever free and is the continuum of unrestricted, undisturbed peace. This is Absolute Bliss, because it is the bliss of the Absolute unrelated to any specific need or interest. (iii) Ichcha-Śakti, or irresistible free will-power of feeling oneself as the Supreme omnipotent Being and without being conditioned by space, time and causality, interest or necessity (iv) Jñāna-Śakti or the power of knowing pure and simple without any

content, that is, without reference to any object, self-conscious i.e., conscious of its own nature as self. (v) Kriyā-Śakti, or the irresistible power of shining forth out of the fulness of joy within, i.e., the ever free power of assuming any name and every form. The Absolute of Tantra is not a mathematical or logical abstraction, not a powerless, featureless, contentless, Reality. It is not a mere identity but 'Identity of Powers', as it were, that is the great magnificent Potency of powers in inseparable union forming one whole without any stress or flutter of movement as yet. "Śreemaṭ paramaśivasya Punaḥ Viśvottirna-Visvātmaka Paramanandamayā Prakāśaikaghanasya Evambidhameva Śivādidharanyātmaṇ Akhilaṁ abhedenaiva Sphurati, Na Tu Vastutaḥ Anyat Kimciṭ Grāhyaṁ Graha-kam Vā, Apitu Śree Parama-Śiva eva Itheva Nānāvicitrasahasrani Sphurati Iti Abhiprāyam (Pratyaviḥṇa Haridyam)."

The very important point to be noted here, is that all these powers are unrestricted being characterised by freedom ; i.e., they are not initiated by any external necessity. They are not superimposed upon the Absolute but they are the constitutive, intrinsic factors in 'Life Divine' for divine play 'Līlā' or Shinning forth.

The Absolute or Parā-Śakti or Parā-Ciṭ is a dynamic spiritual Principle which alternately and eternally shines forth or manifests its powers 'Unmisati' and returns to its pristine glory 'Nimisati'. Each state of evolution and involution together constitutes a moment in 'Eternity' and each moment represents a 'Kalpa' that is the inner process of ideating evolution and involution which forms

a continuum with an Infinite number of Kalpas. Evolution and involution (collectively called Vimarsa) being an integral eternal process in the life of the Absolute.

According to 'Nondualism' of the Vedānta, the Supreme Brahma or the Absolute is indeterminate, devoid of any power or shining forth into the subjective order and the objective order. It is pure 'Jñānam' without the slightest stress of either actual or potential objectivity which is Māyā. Māyā is an undefinable, indescribable 'tertium quid', a third principle which has been assumed for explaining all that is. The world, therefore, is an illusion or illusory experience whose nature and status is grounded in illusion and therefore is to be negated absolutely in order that we may know the Absolute. Tantra philosophy, however, holds a different view. The Absolute or the ultimate Reality is not a powerless, formless, contentless, featureless Identity, but is a concrete dynamic self-conscious, self-luminous, self or Ciṭ-Svarūpa in inseparable union with its five fold intrinsic Śakti, which is collectively known as 'Svatantra' or Vimarsa, the power of shining forth. This is Māyā Śakti, the self's self-limiting power without it there can be no self-manifestation in the world order. Māyā Śakti has been acknowledged both in Tantra and Vedānta philosophy but altogether differently. Hence 'transcendence' and 'immanence' have been differently interpreted from the different standpoints of Tantra and Vedānta. When the Vedānta enjoins that the Absolute is purely transcendental, it regards Māyā as illusion or illusory experience of the objective order which is also an illusion. Therefore the immanent aspect of the Absolute or 'Svaguna Brahma' is

also an illusion. Nirguna Brahma or indeterminate Absolute is ultimately real. In Tantra philosophy 'transcendence' means the state of Parama-Śiva or 'Parā-Śakti' with all its five fold power in a state of equipoise or harmony in which all distinctions remain in subtlest undistinguishable form. Together they form a dynamic continuum in which all these powers constitute one whole Integral Experience in a latent form. "Citisaṃ-kocātṃā Cetno'pi Saṅkucitavisvamayo". 4 (Pratyaviḥṇā). The Absolute is here called Indeterminate Transcendent Ultimate Reality in the sense that the gamut of whole existence is involved in it is inseparable moments in eternity not yet manifested. It is the centripetal point having no magnitude, that is not expressed in magnitude, the world of objects which, in modern science, constitutes centres of power and not inert dead passivity which in Vedānta Philosophy is known as Māyā and in Sāṅkhya Philosophy as 'Jada' that is opposed to or other than the Absolute or Brahma. Māyā, is here regarded as the power of shinning forth of the Absolute into a real world order in which the Absolute conceals itself and shines forth into the manifold variety of individuals and particular objects. It is the self's own self-limiting power not imposed by any external agent or by any external necessity. Māyā Śakti is thus the same light of pure consciousness veiling itself. Māyā is not a third principle, a 'tertium quid', nor a non-conscious principle, but is the Vimarsa-Śakti which remains latent in a jerminal form in 'Parakāśa' or the self-luminous Absolute which is not only self-luminous like a diamond but also self-conscious, i.e., conscious of itself, its own power of shinning forth or self-luminosity. A diamond is not conscious of its

self-luminosity but the Absolute is conscious of its self-luminosity. This is what is known as 'immanence' expressed by the term 'Viśvātmatta'. It indicates the all-pervading, indwelling, informing 'All-Consciousness' remaining identified with its five fold powers of self-consciousness or *Ciṭ Śakti*, 'Ānanda Śakti' or the power of enjoying bliss, *Ichchā-Śakti* or irresistible free will, *Jñāna Śakti*, the power of pure knowing and simple and *Kriyā Śakti* or the irresistible power of assuming any form and name. 'Bigrāha Bigrahī Caiva sarvabigrāha bigrahī' (*Siddhāntasāra*). An important point, which is to be noted here, is that the supreme Absolute Consciousness, *Parā-Śamvit* ever remains in inseparable union with its own '*Vimarsa Śakti*' constituting its five-fold powers, in subtlest form that is, '*Ciṭ-Rupinī*' in the form of consciousness-Power-Bliss '*Satcidānandamayī*'. In other words it is in inalienable union with *parama-Śiva* or *Samvit*. She is then the unmanifested Universe in the form of indifferentiated *Ciṭ*. The '*Saradatiloka*' Tantra says "*yā anādirūpā caitayādhyāsena mahāpralaye Sukṣmāsthitā*" that is, She, the Eternal existed in a subtle state one with *Ciṭ*. We, therefore, conclude that *Prakāśa* and *Vimarsa* are but the two poles of one and the same ultimate Reality and in no stage can ever be bifurcated even in the state of liberation. Thus the spiritual order and the psycho-physical order form the '*Nimesa*' or self-ivolution and '*unmesa*' and self-evolution of the same self respectively and there is no other beside the self. It should be remembered, however, that when it is said that the universe is of the same essence as the Absolute 'consciousness-power-Bliss', we do not mean that the Universe, as it appears to our limited experience, exists in the

same form in the unlimited, all comprehensive integral Experience. If the universe of limited experience were the same in form with the Universe of unlimited, all-comprehensive 'Integral' Experience there would be no distinction between the two. If the supreme Reality or 'Parameśvara' thought, willed, felt, perceived the objective world of names and forms in the human way, then He would not be the Supreme Transcendent Divinity at all. If He hated, loved, enjoyed, suffered, like mortal beings, he would not be the all-perfect, omnipotent, omniscient, ultimate Reality but a limited finite human being with all the imperfections and limitations of mortal existence. There are differences of planes, the material plane, the mental plane and the spiritual plane. They are the real levels or planes in and through which the Absolute, Parama-Samviṭ 'Integral Experience' is manifested. It is the same self here, there and everywhere, as it has been said 'If it is not here, it is not anywhere'. But there are the levels in the evolutionary process of 'Life Divine'. The world is the play ground 'Lilā Kṣhetra' and therefore self-manifestation or self-evolution is the play of the Divine. The world is not a 'vale of tears' but a vale of soul-making, of self-discovery through joys and tears, through sufferings and achievements. This is the meaning of Tapasyā, that is self-discovery through trials and tribulations of life. Both the Śaiva and Śakta non-dualistic philosophy do not make any distinction between Śiva, Parameśvara, the supreme Lord or the Absolute and Śakti, the Supreme self-conscious self-luminous-power, Prakāśa and Vimarsa form one Absolute identity, inseparable and indivisible. Any distinction between the two is only a mental construction, conceptual. Therefore Śiva is Śakti and

Śakti is Śiva, the name and form may vary according to the competency of the Sādhaka, the spiritual aspirant, but in ultimate analysis. Pure Identity without self-luminous, self-conscious-Power bereft of all dynamism is nothing but dead inert passivity which nowhere exists.

‘The Siva Dristi’ says “Oh Almighty Mother ! Thous Art the Absolute Supreme Self-conscious, self-luminous-Power whom we call the Great Lord Siva. This supreme-power is the Absolute Brahma and no other than Brahma. Out of the fulness of joy within, the whole Universe comes being in which She lives and moves and into which she enters at the time of dissolution. This is the Absolute. The Upanisada says, “yato vā imāni bhūtāni yāyante”. The ultimate power like the Absolute or Brahma has been conceived in Tantra philosophy under two aspects both as Svaguna relative and Nirguna or the Absolute. The Niruttara Tantra says, “The same Absolute power or Brahma is conceived as the Relative by the worshipper or the devotee in so far as she is the object or worship, of devotion and is the bestower of the Supreme Values of life. She is also conceived as the Absolute by those who aspire after Kaivalya-Mukti or Absolute cessation of the cycle of birth and rebirth. Those who have transcended all sorts of relativity, the relation between the Divinity and devotee, worshipper and the worshipped are competent to realize in pure contemplation only the supreme power of the Absolute. Here the Absolute of the Supreme indeterminate power is the supreme self “Ayaṃ Ātmā Brahmaḥ” (Brihadāranyaka Upanisada). This is the Absolute, Indeterminate, neither male nor female nor neuter, without any form or name,

says the *Swetāsvatara Upanisada*. In this aspect she is pure Absolute *Ciṭ-Śakti* and not to be identified with any of its modes such as cognition, feeling and volition nor with matter, Life and mind which are its limited or particularised manifestations, its circumscribed manifestations in names and forms. The *Ciṭ Śakti* is the eternal, changeless, Absolute principle of all our changing experiences. The Tantra philosophy enjoins that all is *Ciṭ* manifested in various names and forms by its own self-limiting power, *Māyā Śakti*. This Absolute power or *Ciṭ-Śakti* is to be realised only in the highest state of ecstatic bliss or *Śamādhī*, in a state of absolute transcendence over the cravings of the flesh and the ever changing states and processes of mind, i.e., when the self is free from all limitations of body and mind. "Pure-consciousness or *Ciṭ-Śakti* is impartial, that is nothing in particular, there is no difference, it stands above all antithesis of motion, mass or energy or matter life and mind. As the *Maha-Nirvana Tantra* says "The *Ciṭ-Śakti* manifests itself in two ways :— As it is in itself it is all light, the self-conscious, self-illuminating *Ciṭ-Svarupa*. What is *Ciṭ-Svarupa* is also *Ānanda-Svarupa* i.e., pure *Ciṭ* is also pure bliss, for it is out of the fulness of joy within that the *Ciṭ-Svarūpa* becomes self-conscious, self-luminous principle in manifesting the Universe. The *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanisads* says "Other beings live on a fraction of the Great Bliss". "The ecstatic bliss of *Śiva* and *Śakti* are one for they are inseparate". Hence She is called 'Ekavoga' (*Trishati-11.32*). Here 'Eka' means the Absolute *Ciṭ-Sakti* and 'Bhoga' means 'Śvarupānanda', there being no other than the self, the self enjoys itself. There is 'Āṭmaramana' or play of the self with the self in which the self enjoys the self, not in the form of

any external object but as that form of Ciṭ-Śakti which shines forth into the Universe of objects. The self which is Ciṭ-Svarupā is also the Ciṭ-Śakti or its own object and one with it. For the object is always the Ciṭ-Śakti and there is nothing but the Ciṭ-Śakti. According to the Vāmakeswara Tantra, "the Ciṭ-Śakti is the Subtlest jerm of all potential, actual manifestation. The Ciṭ-Śakti is the all-pervading, indwelling, informing spirit of all, beyond it there can be no independent separate existence of anything. It is in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end of all manifestation. At the time of dissolution everything returns to the Ciṭ-Śakti and remains there in subtlest potentiality or Vimarsa". When Ciṭ Śakti after dissolving everything is in its own Svarupa aspect or as it is in itself, She is called the Absolute, Nirguna, Indeterminate, i.e., can not be determined or qualified by anything particular. Mahamohopadhyāya Gopinath Kaviraj in his monumental work 'Śakti-Sādhana' has stated that the perfect Being is the ground and basis of all that exists. This Ciṭ-Śakti can not be called even what we mean by pure consciousness, for that is also a mode of Ciṭ-Śakti. It is beyond mental or verbal determination, that is, it is not a mental construction. Hence it is indefinable, indescribable, that is nothing definite or particular. This is the 'Paramapada' or the highest realization. This is Absolute existence with its inseparable Ciṭ-Śakti or Self-luminous, self-conscious power. It is a state of perfect equipoise in which parama-Śiva or Brahma is in eternal embrace with His own consort, Paramā-Śakti enjoying eternal Bliss. This is what has been enjoined in the Upanisada as Param, Brahman or the Absolute. This Ciṭ-Śakti is both transcendent and immanent, all-permeating,

as well as all-transcending, both Visvāṭmaka as well as Visvottīrna. The Śaiva Śakta Philosophy has described this indeterminate Absolute as “Prakaśa-Vimarsāṭmaka”, this is the indeterminate Absolute where its own inalienable Ciṭ-Śakti remains identical with Prakāś. The Vimarsa is the dharma, the essence of Prakāśa, just as heat is the essence of fire. Therefore they are not two but one. There is no essential distinction between the two, i.e., distinction in essence or Svarūpa. All dualism, all duality are conceptual super-imposition upon Reality which Reality is not. The Parama-Śiva or ‘Parā-Ciṭ’ or the Absolute of Tantra Philosophy is the transcendental Reality, in which all becoming remains in its Subtlest potentiality which is ‘Vimarsa’ Śakti. It is therefore not to be described as a ‘Tattva’ but ‘Tattvā-tīta’ Reality.

In Parama-Śiva or the ultimate Reality being both Prakasamātra or transcendent and Vimarsa-Śakti immanent, is also called “Devi Tripura Sundarī” ‘Kāma-Kameswarī’. In other words, Śiva by His own irresistible free-will-power brings into existence by virtue of His five fold powers of creation, preservation, dissolution, ‘ābirvāba’ or the out-going current and tirodhāna, involution or return current out of the fulness of joy, ‘Ananda-Śakti’, the world order of being, of the perceptual order and the ideal order of being or the conceptual order. In the ‘Kāmakaḷā-Vilāsa’ which is an authoritative tantrik text, the Lord Parama Śiva who is the Pure Saṭ-Ciṭ or Prakasa, is one with His ‘Vimarsha Śakti’ which is called the ‘Visphurana-Śakti’ or the stress towards shining forth. Śiva is called the white ‘Bindu’ or Self-luminous principle and Śakti is called the red Bindu or the ever

active cosmic principle forming a continuum of being and becoming. The identity of these two aspects, the static Prakāśamātra and Vimarsa is eternal like that of fire and heat. The self or the 'Ātman' is the self-luminous, Self-conscious Integral Experience or Absolute consciousness. The 'Idam' is the same self realized in the self as experience and experienced. The Sruti 'Sa Aikshata' means that the ultimate Reality or the self Pramātmā having seen the universe in Himself as Himself did not see any other i.e., He saw nothing outside of Himself, because all things are already in Him. He appears to Himself as His own Self as 'I am the Experience' which is continuous (Akhandā), massive (Ghana), Being (Sat), Consciousness (Cit) and Bliss (Ānanda). "Akhandasachchidānandaghanatnaranubhavo'ham". This is Brahma-Swarupa of the Absolute Pure Light of Consciousness.

The most important point to be noted here, is that in all forms of Bharatiya Sādhana, in spite of esoteric and exoteric practices, there is a common feature. The Absolute Reality is conceived as having two aspects :— The negative and positive, the static and the dynamic, (a) Withdrawing of the whole universe in its subtlest potentiality and (b) the Process of shinning forth into the universe of objects and persons. Pure consciousness or Cit and Power or Śakti form one Integral whole, 'All-consciousness'. But in the process of shinning forth duality appears and duality is the cause of sufferings, liberation, therefore, is the state of transcendence of all duality. This ultimate state of non-duality has been variously called in Indian Sādhan Śāstra, 'Advaita', 'Maithuna', 'Yuganaddha', 'Yāmala', 'Sāmarasya', Yugala. In

Saivism, Śāktaism and Vaiṣṇavism which constitute the main currents of Bhāratīya Sādhana or Indian Spiritualism these two aspects of the ultimate Reality are inseparable, indistinguishable 'abhinna'. The Lord Śiva in non-dualistic Saivism is said to be inseparably associated with Śakti or Power, without the latter Śiva would be 'Śaba' or dead inert passivity. In non-dualistic Śāktaism, power which is not self-conscious, self-luminous 'Intelligence' or 'Ciṭ' can not be the indwelling spiritual principle immanent in the evolutionary process. 'Power', when rightly understood is the self-conscious, self-luminous irresistible free will-to-create. In non-dualistic Vaiṣṇavism, in Śaiva, Śākta Schools of thought one of the fundamental tenets is that the human psycho-physical organism is the epitome of all that is true of objective existence. "Yaṭ Atra Nasti, taṭ Kutrapi Nasti, Yadantaram Tat Bahyaṃ". The inward and the outward are not alien to each other. They are intrinsically bound up. This has been beautifully expressed in the conception of the Absolute, Śiva Absolute Ciṭ or Supreme transcendent Consciousness is to be realised in the 'Sahasrāra' i.e., the thousand petalled lotus in the pericarp of the 'Cerebrum', in inseparable union with paramā-Śakti, or Kundalinī Śakti, the Macrocosmic Power in Her subtlest form having her abode in the Mulādhāra Cakra, the order extreme-most point in the spinal cord. The quintessence of Tantric Sādhānā consists in the rousing up of the latent world-power from this centripetal point and uniting her with the highest Ciṭ or Parama-Śiva in the cerebrum. This is known as Rāja-Yoga in Bharatiya spiritualism which consists in the awakening of the 'Kundalinī-Power' the ground and the root of the physical, vital and psychical powers. The aim

and ideal of the practitioner in Rāja-Yoga is to realize his intrinsic unity with Absolute-consciousness. In this state all physical, vital and psychical forces are consumed into the transempirical consciousness. This is the state of supreme transcendental 'consciousness - power-bliss' which pours down its showers of heavenly ambrosia to feed and sustain the psycho-physical organism in all its parts. This is the state of self-realization where all ignorance or 'Avidya' completely vanishes and the spiritual aspirant realises his own self as 'self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence'. Another fundamental tenet of Bhāratiya Sādhana is that Kundalinī in her subtlest form as world-power represents the female aspect and Śiva, Saṭ-Ciṭ or Pure consciousness in the cerebrum represents male aspect in the psycho-physical organism. This has found beautiful expression in the conception of 'Ardha-nārīśvara' expressing the inseparable union of Śiva-Śakti or consciousness-power-Bliss Prakāśa and Vimarsa. This is 'Integral Experience' from the standpoint of the highest realization of the spiritual aspirant. The same view has been beautifully depicted in the inseparable Union, of Rādhā, the Vimarsa or dynamic Bliss-aspect and Krishna or Prakaśa or Saṭ-Ciṭ aspect of the ultimate Reality. Rādhā represents the mighty surge of ecstatic bliss ever realising Parameswara Krishna or Being-consciousness in the thousand-petalled lotus or 'Sahasrāra' i.e., cerebrum. In the Sahajiyā vaiṣṇava cult the two aspects of Sa-ha-ja or the ultimate Reality are stated to be Krishna and 'Rādhā' who represent the male and female aspects of the psycho-physical organism. The 'Male' and the 'Female' are symbols or Psycho-physical forms of nature and spirit. The male ever longs for union with

the 'female' as the 'female' will ever yearn for the 'Male'. Thus there is an apparent dualism in all male-female partnership. But it will not do to perpetuate this apparent dualism into all eternity, for such dualism is the cause of all the worries, all the miseries, all the psychical, physical conflicts that are going on in the inner and the outer world. Man must be re-incarnated, re-generated and this regeneration consists in re-gaining the 'Integral Experience' in and through male-female partnership. Nature or Parāprakṛiti and spirit or 'Purusa' are basically one and when we realized this we can get a glimpse of the 'Blissful Unity' in the same way as salt dissolves in water, so also the spirit that takes its proper spouse transcends all boundaries. It penetrates into the essential, emotional, moving, dynamic unity of what seems to be separate and distinct. Man seeks his counter-part in the 'Eternal Feminine' but this part is also hidden within himself. When a man comes into contact with his latent intrinsic 'Femininity' and woman with her latent 'Masculinity', thus giving up the One-sidedness of his or her being, their whole being is illumined into blissful ecstasy. This ultimate union with the eternal 'Masculine' and the eternal 'Feminine' is realised in and through the Experience of sex-polineation, technically called 'Maithuna'. It is contented in both Śākta and Vaiṣṇava Sādhana that bi-sexuality is to be understood as a symbol but not as per Sex. 'Masculinity' and 'Femininity' are only poles of one and the same ultimate Reality. These are aspects within the whole. The apparent opposition of the 'Male' and 'Female' with its endless varieties and transformations exposes man's insularity, worries, anxieties and sufferings. Men and

women and their bi-sexuality are symbols, gross forms representing the ultimate and inseparable union of Śiva-Śakti, Radhakrishna, that is 'Jugala' in eternal endless embrace expressed beautifully as 'Śiva-Śakti-Sāmarasya' or 'Radha-Krishna-Lilā-Vilasa'. This is the 'Transcendental Experience' of the spiritual aspirant. The polarization of 'Masculinity' or 'Male-power' and Femininity or 'Female-power' is at the root of creation whose gross-manifestations are 'Sperm and Dvām' undergoing transformation through the process of charming or Sex-polineation, 'Maithuna' in Tantrik parlance. But man must transcend the gross the limitation and cravings of the flesh and recognize the Divine Play of the spirit, or Prakāśa interlocked with power or Vimarsa. "The Śiva-Śakti-Sāmarasya" otherwise expressed as 'Radha-Krishna-Lila Vilasa' or 'Kamakalā-Vilasha', the Eternal Play of the spirit or self with His intrinsic Free Will and Ānanda-Śakti is to be realised here and now, in and through male-female partnership, the vehicle of expression of the Absolute and not in a world after ; for creation is nothing but the eternal continuum of divine play which is initiated by the fulness of joy within the Absolute. When men and women through male-female partnership, in every sphere of life, transcend the everchanging limitations of the flesh i.e., their gross mundane cravings through intense love or 'Parāanurati', the worldly love of the human couple is transformed, introverted, sublimated into the Divine Love. This is the state of liberation as enjoined in non-dualistic Śākta and Vaisnava Philosophy, for the whole universe is the manifestation of Divine Consciousness eternally wedded to His intrinsic dynamic power of irresistible free will. It is to be noted here that

Self-realisation which may be called 'the meeting of extremes' or Kundaliní Yoga is not theoretical knowledge or scriptural knowledge of the Self, but it is presupposes an indispensable condition, 'Categorical imperative' namely active, whole-hearted participation in Sādhana or appropriate spiritual practices to be learnt from Guru-deva or spiritual preceptor who not only knows the Self but also knows how to, realise it in and through this psycho-physical organism, known as 'Brahma Pura', the above of Brahma, the vehicle of self manifestation of Brahma or the self.

CHAPTER—X

Raja-Yoga In Tantra

The word, 'Yoga' has been used in various senses. It may mean union of the individual self (Jivātma) with the universal self (Paramātma). But as the self cannot be characterised as this or that individual, I think, 'Yoga' in the above sense has been understood not in the proper way. 'Yoga' may mean also the union of God and Man ; but as this assumption affirms a dualism between God and Man, it does not indicate the true significance of 'Yoga'. 'Yoga' in reality, is the affirmation of the identity of the same self in its sleeping, slumbering state to its awakened state of self-luminosity and self-consciousness. This presupposes a lower plane of existence between the mind and individual self, between the senses and the mind and between the objects and the senses.

The quintessence of Indian culture, since the very dawn of world culture, lies in the affirmation that it is exclusively in 'Yoga' that one can find the key to the solution of all the problems of life and mind as well as to the realisation of the supreme values of human existence. 'Ayaṃ tu paramaḥ Dharmaḥ yat yogenā Aṭmadarśanam'. In other words, it is by means of yoga that self-realisation, the Summum Bonum of life is to be

obtained. The individual man steeped in the darkness of ignorance and weltering in the whirlpool of worldly pleasures, full of imperfection cannot realise the Infinite and the Eternal, the intrinsic Divinity of outward and inward nature, unless it can get over the influences of the mind and its ever changing states and modes. The self-luminous, self-conscious Intelligence cannot shine forth in its pristine glory unless the mind, its fluctuating modes, the senses are calmed down, controlled and directed towards the realisation of the self. This withdrawal of the senses from the external world of objects and their consequent merging in the mind marks the first stepping-stone to Yoga. When the aspirant ascends to a higher stage, he realises 'Yoga' in the suspension of the functions of the mind. In this state the mental level is achieved but the mind does not completely cease. Rising higher up, the mind loses all its activities and its distinctness as an entity vanishes altogether. As the mind gradually loses its identity, the self begins to rise up from the deep caverns of self-obliviousness and beholds its true nature as the silent spectator of all time and existence. This in the vision of 'Sub specie Aeternitatis' the ens perfectimum, the ens realisimum (Parama Sreyaḥ, Parama Preyaḥ), the yoga per excellence or Rāja Yoga. This has been very well said in Tantrik parlance as the self-awakening of the 'Kundalinī Devi' or the self-conscious, self-luminous Conscious-power (Cīṭ-Śakti) from its dormant sleeping state in its onward march for self-realisation, Ādhāre Sarva-bhūtānāṃ sphurantī Bidyutākriti samkhavartāḥ krame Devi Sarvamāvṛṭya tisthati kundalībhūtā sarpānāṃ angaśriyaupeyasi Sarvavedamayen Mātā Sarvattvamayee Śive Sākṣhāḥ Sukṣhmatarā Bibhu Tridhama-

yananī Devi Sabda-Brahma - Svarūpinī (Sarada Tilok Tantra Ch. 1).

According to 'Rāja Yoga' as expounded in Tantra, the Macrocosmic Consciousness as embodied in human body is called the subject, the knower. It is covered up in five sheathe, in sanskrit 'Kosha', viz., (a) the physical sheath (Annamaya kosa), (b) the vital sheath (the prānamaya kosa), (c) the mental sheath (the Manamaya kosa), (d) the unconscious or sub-conscious sheath (the Vijñānamaya kosa) and (e) and finally the sheath of supreme transcendental blissful consciousness (Ānandmaya kosa). In the vital sheath or prānamaya kosa resides the 'elan vital' or cosmic life-force which is constituted of five fundamental vital airs, viz., (a) the prāṇa which controls inhalation, (b) the udāna which controls the ascending vital force, (c) the apāna which controls the descending vital force or exhalation which discharges wind, excrement, urine and semen, (d) the samāna which controls digestion, glandular secretions and (e) vyāna which controls the opening and closing of the eyes and all other involuntary actions. Here comes the psycho-physical exercise for the yogin. This is called prāṇāyāma or the practice and development of the power of controlling and directing psycho-physical forces. To achieve this, one must sit straight, keep the spinal chord erect in order that the vital fluid inside the spinal chord may flow freely, the body, the chest, the neck and the head must be held in a straight line in order that rhythmical breathing may be produced. The aspirant must also be correctly acquainted with the psycho-physical nerve channels in sanskrit 'Nāḍis' which are very subtle ; hence imperceptible

channels for the flow of psychical forces whose conducting agents are the aforesaid five principal vital airs or vyāus. The Tantras have mentioned fourteen principal Nadris or nerve centres of which three are most fundamental. These are (a) the median-nerve, in sanskrit 'Susumna Nādi', (b) on its left is the Irā Nādi, (c) on the right is the Pingalā Nādi. The median nerve or 'Susumna' is the chief nerve centre situated in the hollow of the spinal column, figuratively called the 'mount Meru' of the autonomous nervous system. The 'Irā Nādi' on the left and the Pingalā on the right coil round the median nerve. The Susumnā Nādi is the great highway for the passage of the vital and psychical forces in the human organism. These forces again are concentrated in centres or cakras arranged along the median nerve or Susumnā Nādi and interconnected and intercepted by it. In those centres or cakras all our vital and psychical forces are stored up. These are six in number. The first is the (a) Mulādhāra cakra situated in the lowest part of the spinal chord. This station of the Susumnā Nādi or median nerve is the root, the secret source and fountain of all vital and psychical forces as well as of cosmic sound, (b) Higher up is the Svadhisthāna cakra or the centre of sex-energy, (c) above it, there is the 'Manipura', the centre of ego-sense 'Ahaṃpratīti', (d) the next is the heart-nerve centre, the 'Anāhata' cakra, the centre of blood circulation, also discharging vital and psychical energy to every portion of the organism. This is the heart nerve which radiates the whole of psycho-physical organism. It is like the nucleus of an atom round which all vital and psychical forces move and dance, as it were. This is the centre where 'the dance of Eternity on the footlights

of time' is enacted. This has been called in Tantra 'Hṛdayaṃ Parameśitu', the heart-centre of Parameśwara, the indwelling, informing spirit of all. The pilgrim's progress then touches the fifth station, (e) Bisuddhacakra located in the throat. This is the centre where all vital and psychical forces are purified, (hence it is called 'Bisuddha Cakra') and become very subtle. Rising up in the un-rolling, unfolding process, the sādha or the spiritual pilgrim attains the (f) 'Ajña cakra' situated between the eye-brows and which is called the third eye or the region of super-sensuous perception. Here the three fundamental psychic nerves, the median Susumna, the left nerve Ira, the right nerve Pingala, meet together and then separate. Here all vital and psychical forces are consumed into trans-empirical consciousness. Integrating all and yet transcending all is the supreme transcendental Conscious-power shining in its self-luminosity and self-consciousness and sending its rays downwards through the 'Susumnā' or the median nerve over the whole psycho-physical organism and the yogin merges into a state of blissful ecstasy. This is the state of self-realisation.

Rāja-yoga consists in the awakening of the 'Kundalinī power', the ground and root cause of all physical, vital and psychical powers. The aim and ideal of the practitioner in Rāja-yoga is the awakening of this unconscious power wherein lies coiled up and concealed the mighty surge of eternity for creation, preservation and destruction.' Once this fundamental power is roused or activated through its various levels or cakras reaching its destination in the thousand petalled lotus in the pericarp of the brain centre, figuratively 'sahasrāra', so described.

This is the state of supreme transcendental bliss which pours down its showers of heavenly ambrosia to feed and sustain the psycho-physical organism in all its parts. This is the state of self-realisation when all ignorance or Avidyā completely vanishes and the spiritual aspirant realises his true nature as 'self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence'. Thus the awakening of the Kūṇḍalinī or the self from its sleeping slumbering state is the supreme way of attaining divine life, divine wisdom, super-conscious perception. This awakening of the 'Kūṇḍalinī' may be realised through one pointed intense love for the Divine self and this is known as 'Bhakti yoga'. It may be realised by completely disinterested pursuit of truth, known as Jñāna-yoga. It may also be realised by absolute and complete surrender of all activities and fruits of actions, merits or demerits to God, the divine self in man and this is called Karma-yoga.

Now, to return to the main theme, it may be pointed out at the outset, that practice in 'Rāja-yoga' involves three yogic practices leading to three stages, viz. (a) Haṇṣa-yoga, which involves the art of controlling and uniting inhalation or 'prāṇa' or incoming current with Apāna, exhalation or the outgoing current and retaining the two currents represented by the Bija 'Hang' which stands for Śiva or indeterminate consciousness and 'Saḥ' which stands for power, the union of supreme consciousness with supreme joy. This is called Śiva-Śakti samarasa-tā. Gradually as the retention of inhalation and exhalation is continued for some time, a stage arises known as trance in which the yogin realises the self-revelation of the cosmic 'Nāda', 'Om' arising out of the Manipura

Cakra or naval nerve-centre. This is the very subtle macrocosmic sound permeating the entire universe of multifarious microcosmic sound whose manifestations are the infinite number of alphabets through which we comprehend meanings in words and speech. One thing which is to be noted here, is that all thought-processes and breathing-processes are inter-related and the complete control of the latter leads to control over the former. When the twin processes of inhalation and exhalation are held in a state of equilibrium, there arises complete suspension of breathing process as well as complete cessation of thought, feelings, emotions and passions. The yogi attains a quiescent state, becomes free from bondage to suffering and has super-normal experiences. This is 'Hana-sa-yoga' the stepping stone to the attainment of self-realisation. This is the state of negation and not of positive attainment. The Tantra says, 'Sabda-Brahmani Nisnātaḥ para Brahmadhigachhati'. After realising the macrocosmic sound, you should enter the state of para-Brahma or the supreme state of perfect Bliss which is self-realisation or Brahma-realisation.

It should be borne in mind that the *conditio sine quibus non* or indispensable condition which a practitioner in 'Rāj-Yoga' must fulfil is that he must be spiritually initiated by an expert in the line, Guru Deva or the spiritual preceptor. According to Tantra Śāstra or Tantrick scriptures there exist three lines of Gurus. The first and the highest is purely super-human, in Sanskrit 'Divyaugha' meaning heavenly line, the second is the line of Siddha Guru, in Sanskrit 'Siddhaugha' the line of Guru who have attained the

highest limit of spiritual illumination, the third is the line of religious teachers, in sanskrit called 'Mānavaugha' human line of gurus with some spiritual attainments. After the disciple, has been well tested, the Guru initiates his disciples with the Mantra which has conferred upon him spiritual illumination or 'Siddhi', Mantra-Diksha or spiritual initiation by a Guru is then the most essential condition for self-realisation. Now what is Mantra and what are its effects upon the Yogi and upon the sleeping Goddess 'Kundalinī' or the self in its sleeping slumbering state? A clue to the power of 'Mantras' lies in the Indian theory of Music. The entire universe is pervaded by Macrocosmic sound, sanskrit called 'Nāda-Brahma' or 'Sabda-Brahma'. This macrocosmic sound is constituted by millions and millions of micro-cosmic vibrations. Now, if the key-note or in sanskrit the 'Vādi Sura' of a particular body or substance be acquired by Sādhanā or prolonged practice, by its utterance the particular body or substance can be disintegrated. In modern physics, the whole problem has been explained in terms of the laws of vibration. Every human organism exhibits its own vibratory rates and when this rate of vibration is known, the organism of human form can by occult practice of it, be disintegrated. To the Mantra-yogi who has been initiated by a Mantra of any Deity, his Guru Deva has to teach him the art of setting up psychic or gift-wave communications similar to but transcending, wireless or telepathic communication with that Deity. On account of magnificent, yet supreme power of sound formulated in Mantra which consists of a number of vibrations corresponding to the particular rate of vibrations or spiritual powers, the Goddess Kundalinī awakens. As

the outer air vibrates to gross physical sounds, the inner vital airs and psychical vibrations are set in motion and awakened by the chanting of Mantras. The Goddess 'Kundalinī' first catches up the subtlest occult sound 'Nāda' and in tones of Divine music, she awakens from her throne, as it were, the root-support, psychic centre, 'Mulādhāra Cakra' and ascends higher and higher up towards the thousand-petaled lotus or 'Sahasrāra Cakra' where macrocosmic sound with its inner and outer vibrations are transmuted upon the rise of 'self-shining, self-luminous Intelligence'. Here all music subsides, all vital and psychical vibrations are transmuted in the Blissful ocean of Eternity. This is the end, the highest ideal of Rāja-Yoga, 'Śāntaṃ Advaitaṃ'.

Living in an age of science and technology whose aim is to cater to material comforts and happiness, teachings and preachings of wise yogins of yore appear to be incongruous, yet they must cry in the wilderness of scepticism and materialism which pervade modern civilised life. We are extolling atomic power as the highest and most glorious achievement of man. We have been able to discover and release tremendous physical power of Nature either for destructive or constructive purposes and we have to pay very dear price for all these. We have become oblivious of the fact that man have discovered atoms, atoms have not discovered themselves. Man has ever remained unknown and unexplored behind the machine. He has been crucified, repudiated, humiliated and neglected in this age of objective science and technology. On the other hand, India has ever tried to discover and release highly rational, moral

and spiritual powers, tremendous vital and psychical powers lying dormant in man and to bring them to the focus of our self-consciousness by means of yoga which has the only meaning, viz. unification, so that every man may be united with every other man in thoughts, deeds and aspirations. There is no other way of achieving unification of man with man, man with Divine life, unification of man-in-God with God-in-man. Unification means identification, realisation of the identity of the same self here, there and every where. The necessity, universality and inevitability of yoga can only be ignored by those who concentrate and release vital and psychical forces for the accumulation of mundane values, wealth, power and sex. We are not denying the fact that they are necessary for earthly existence, but when considered absolutely they corrupt absolutely. This is the verdict of history. Man has made history, history does not make man. When, on the other hand, man concentrates on the discovery and release of benevolent vital and psychical forces by means of yoga, there lies the emancipation of man from bondage and suffering.

CHAPTER—XI

Kundalini-Yoga or the Art of Brahmacarya

I have pointedly explained in all the previous Chapters that Tantra is not any system of Philosophy like other systems of Philosophy, Eastern as well as Western. Though, in the East, all systems of philosophy have their origin in Revelation, yet no body can deny that Indian Philosophy proper, is rationalisation, interpretation by means of logical analysis and reasoning the revealed truths of the Vedas and the Tantras. Moreover, Philosophy, as it is prevalent today, lays exclusive emphasis upon one side of human nature, namely the intellect and “by over-stressing its philosophy easily explodes intolerance of learned scurrility”. Philosophy, today, has not been able to enrich human life, not only because it is one-sided but also because it is detached from life. It is, therefore, no wonder, that the Tantras come as a necessary corrective for the onesidedness of philosophical reasoning. The constructive philosophy of Tantra has sounded a different note. The Tantra Philosophy is an attempt to restore man in his proper place and to enable him to grasp life in its entirety which does not teach rejection and denunciation of the hard facts of life but accepts them just as they are. Its aim is to harmonise, reconcile, coordinate ‘Bhoga’ with ‘Tyāga’, enjoyment with renunciation. It not only enables us to know the supreme

values of life but also teaches us how to work them out here and now. Hence knowledge is subservient to Sādhana or Yoga and Tapa. Its philosophy is born out of spiritual illumination and not out of discursive thought, wonder or curiosity. An illumined soul may not know a, b, c of Logic or philosophy, yet he may be capable of the highest spiritual enlightenment by means of 'Kundalini Yoga', meditation, worship, mantra-siddhi and other kinds of esoteric practices. Philosophy of Tantra is constructive, because it gives us a formula for the reconstruction of our personal life, our domestic life, our social life, our national life and of the world order. It does not preach renunciation at the outset ; for that would mean denunciation of all that counts in the economy of life. It does not hope for creation of a Sannyāsī order of rigid asceticism looking upon the world of actual life as an illusion or a hell of sorrow. One may decry the world and human life but the world will be there for all time whether we renounce it or denounce it. Its philosophy consists in the reaffirmation of what has been denied and decried. No true knowledge can be obtained without Yoga, 'Yogena Lavate Jñanam'. The specific Yoga which Tantra has put forward is based upon a very sound and constructive view of life. Our great sages of yore, in their supreme state of spiritual illumination, came to realise that the nature of ultimate Reality is in the form of Cosmic Consciousness in eternal union with Cosmic Power. The Absolute is not a barren abstraction, but a dynamic concrete Reality which ever shines forth in universal manifestation by virtue of an inward urge from within, the irresistible free will-to-create. This is 'Kāma' or procreative Energy manifested in all

creation. Self-manifestation is an eternal process and the process has been technically called in Sanskrit 'Maithuna' or the process of shinning forth of Cosmic Power in union with Śiva or Cosmic consciousness. Srūtis like 'Ahaṃ Prajāyema', 'Ahaṃ Bahusyāma' are pointers to this fact. This process is manifested eternally in all forms of creation. Hence it has been said that Śiva-Śakti, Purusa-Prakriti in eternal embrace is the matrix of all creation, the creative spirit in the evolutionary process. The differentiation into male and female, into 'Sperm' and 'Ovum' is a glaring instance in point. All manifestation is divine play, 'Kāmakalā-Vilāsa' resulting in unrestricted bliss out of which creation proceeds eternally. Our emotional life, our passionate aspirations are linked up with sex-life, which is ever operating pre-natally, determining the selection of the future parents and of the actual sex in embryonic development. Human relationship is a problem both of within and without. In the outer world, we meet men and women, so in the inner world within the human psyche there are the tender feminine traits in the soul of the male and the hard masculine traits in the soul of the female. It is not possible for any normal human being or human society to renounce or to denounce the 'Eternal' 'Kāma-kalā', sex-drive in the male as well as in the female. Even if it be possible by means of rigid continence to control this intrinsic driving urge, this autonomous self-assertiveness of irresistible free will-to-create by sublimation or by means of certain Yogic practices or artificial self-control, all these means can not totally annihilate 'Kāma-Śakti' procreative urge which is not only humanly impossible but also utterly impracticable ; simply because it is the intrinsic 'Divine Power,'

the dynamic creative Ānanda-Śakti of Divinity to shine forth in creation. Who can control this Divine irresistible free-will, Ānanda Śakti or 'Kāmakaḷā Vilāsa' of Divine Life? Let one come forward and say that one can totally absorb in his isolated personality this irresistible passionate drive in Divine Nature to manifest itself in sex-polarisation in male and female forms. In spring time, when all Nature, all manifestation, blossoms forth into the myriads of variegated colours, of fruits and foliage, in youth, when, Nature manifests all that is best in her in respect of vigour, emotions and passionate longings, 'looking before and after and pining for what is not', what is other than what he is, i.e., the eternal 'Feminine' no means of self-torture, repression or sublimation can be effective. This acknowledgment of the omnipotence and omnipresence of 'Kāma-Kalā', imperfectly stated as 'sex-drive' in man and woman, the most powerful motive force, may easily mislead one to one-sided interpretation and abuse of the intrinsic merits of sex-life. That it is not merely a question of physical and physiological and even psychical sexuality is borne out by many sacred injunctions and warnings in Tantra. Human existence and the supreme values of life can not be imprisoned in the prison-house of biological necessity. The procreative cosmic 'Energy', the 'Elan' refuses to be kept confined, and is evolving toward higher and higher manifestations in the hierarchy of its unfolding, unrolling process. Its best and highest expression lies in introverting, in harmonising that biological sex-urge with the spiritual life of man. The natural cravings of the flesh must be sublimated, transmuted, introverted, absorbed in the spiritual life of man in order that man or woman may realise his/her

intrinsic divinity. We may imagine that it is humanly possible to transcend the cravings of the flesh, the natural instinctive appetites, our bondage to the senses, by means self-torture, by living a life of austere asceticism and penance by renouncing and denouncing the 'eternal feminine' manifested in human nature only to discover in the long run that he/she has so long lived in his/her illusion of detachment, a life of repressed desires. Such an unnatural, artificial life of rigid continence divested of all light and colour can never be the *ens realissimum*, the *ens perfectum* of human existence. On the other hand, we may imagine a happy and perfect married life according to the accepted conventions of society, only to suffer internal hellish pain of obsessions, repressions, fear, hatred for the feminine resulting in many nervous diseases. All these facts are pointers to the obvious. It is not by any kind of patch work, sublimation, repression or temporary adjustment that a peaceful, blissful, harmonised human existence can be achieved. The gulf between our emotional, volitional nature manifested in our sex-life and life divine can be bridged over. Such patch-work, temporary make-shifts instead of radiating happiness, bliss, peace and harmony breaks down, at the slightest provocation in complete disillusionment or divorce in law courts. The differentiation of Cosmic Energy into the Eternal 'Masculine' and the 'Eternal Feminine', in the gross form of 'Sperm' and 'Ovum' in Tantra called 'Bindu' and 'Rajas' constitutes the two poles of cosmic Procreative Energy in the heart of Reality. In every living cell there is the evidence of the nucleus having a certain kind of mass, however insignificant, it may be, and the cell-energy radiating out of it. Exhalation and Inhalation

which exhibit the working of the 'Elan Vital' or cosmic Life-Energy and which preserves and sustains the living organism, and nerve-currents arising out of the automatic nervous system, the differentiation of the cerebral hemispheres are pointers to the fact that creation proceeds from an original integrity. All-consciousness manifests itself out of the fulness of joy within, cosmic Procreative Energy differentiated into the masculine and the feminine. The positive and negative charges issuing out of the nucleus indicate the process of differentiation of Cosmic Power. The union of Śiva and Śakti, or rather of Macrocosmic Consciousness and Macrocosmic Energy in the magnificent conception of 'Ardha-Nāriswara', is symbolic of the highest realisation of Tantra Sādhana.

In all forms of living organisms, there is a male principle in a gross form called 'Sperm' and a female principle in a gross form called 'Ovum' in which cosmic procreative Energy is polarised. The creative spirit which binds together man and woman in its self-manifestation, in its work of creation is represented in the Symbolic form of 'Śiva-Śakti', 'Radhā-Krishna', 'Mahā-laxmi', 'Mahavishnu,' 'Rama-Sīta' representing and indicating the inalienable union of Macrocosmic Consciousness with Macrocosmic Energy or Śakti. The male principle, in its pure subtlest macrocosmic consciousness has been presented in Tantra as 'Urdha Bindu' or Parā-Caitanya situated in the Pericap of the Cerebrum, technically 'Sahasrāra' the female principle presented as 'Adha-Bindu' the subtlest 'cosmic energy', Parā-Śakti is situated in the lowest lobe of the cerebrospinal Axis technically called 'Mulādhara Cakra'. It is evident that so long as we

conceive or imagine that 'Urdha Bindu' or the Uppermost centre of Cosmic consciousness and 'Adha Bindu' on the lower-most centre of cosmic energy remain dormant in isolation, as a piece of magnet and material substance, we arrive at the conception of the Indeterminate Absolute at both ends. It is the Indeterminate Cosmic Consciousness or purusa as the Silent Spectator of the universal drama. This is the indeterminate Absolute of Vedanta Philosophy. Cosmic Power or Energy conceived in isolation from Cosmic consciousness is the indeterminate Prakriti of Sāṅkhya Philosophy 'Avyaktā Jadā Prakriti'. Here the great Acarya Avinava Gupta says 'Such indeterminate Absolute is nothing but a barren abstraction, threadbare residuum of logical chopping, the product of 'negation', a mere passivity bereft of power. The truth is that cosmic consciousness or 'All-consciousness', Parā-caitanya and Cosmic Energy or Parā-Śakti remain always in inseparable union, in eternal embrace by an intrinsic affinity technically called 'Kāma' whose gross manifestation is the urge for sex-poleniation. It can, therefore be concluded that the polarisation of the two Bindus represented by the symbol 'Visarga', the uppermost limit of cosmic Consciousness and the lower-most limit of cosmic Energy which is procreative energy per excellence forms a continuum. It is due to our self-obliviousness that they appear as differentiated but when it awakens from its slumbering state, there is supreme realisation of their eternal union.

It has already been pointed out that Tantra Philosophy has a constructive programme for the moral and spiritual elevation of mankind is general. Those who

aspire for the highest realisation by denouncing the human apparatus and the psychic must know first that the physical body with a marvellous nervous system is the 'Brahmapura' the vehicle of the manifestation of the Absolute. So purification of the body and the mind is the indispensable condition of Brahma-realisation or self-realisation. Hence it has been enjoined 'Sarīramādyam Khalu Dharmasādhanaṃ. In other words absolute purification of the body and the mind is essentially necessary for the attainment of the Summum Bonum of life and this pre-supposes a knowledge of the autonomous nervous system specially of the main channels of communication namely 'Irā', 'Pīngalā' and 'Susumnā' the medium nerve in and through which Macrocosmic Consciousness and Macrocosmic power or Creative Energy, realise, their inseparable union.

Indian spiritualism or Sadhanā is directed towards self-realisation, or self-emancipation. Jiva or the individual self is no other than Śiva in a state of self-obliviousness. The moot problem is 'how to rise from this state of spiritual stupor and wake up to the daylight of self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence' ? This is the perennial problem of the Vedas and the Tantras. The Upanisadic address to humanity, 'Rise, Wake up and realise purpose of human existence', but the problem is, 'how' ? And by what method ? What are the spiritual practices or 'Sādhana' involved in the awakening of the self from the deep caverns of slumbering memory, out of this Tāmasic state of darkness of ignorance, of self-obliviousness ? 'Tamasā Ma Yotirga maya'. 'Penetrate deeper into the abysmal depth of your personality in search of spiritual illumination', but

‘what is the process, wherein lies the key which will unlock the door of self-illumination’? This is the moot point which has been discussed at length in all Indian Philosophy and spiritualism or *Adhyātma Sādhana*, various yogic practices have been put forward, various methods of worship, meditation, prayer, have been introduced in the religious life of the people. There are scholars who advocate that the method of self-realisation consists in (a) listening reverence to *Sruti-Vākyas* or revealed truths of the Vedas, (b) mental comprehension by means of philosophical reasoning the implication of the revealed truths, (c) after comprehensive reasoning arrival at *Siddhānta* or conclusive truth, (d) continued meditation on these truth. They say strict adherence to those disciplines lead to self-realisation which means the identity of the self with the Absolute by complete negation of all that is objectively real. There are also yogic practices which advocate absolute cessation of mental states and processes of thinking, feeling and willing and the self will shine forth in its pristine glory. The Tantras, have prescribed a different method of awakening the individual *Jiva*, no other than *Śiva* in a state of spiritual stupor, ‘*Yoga Nidra*’ with all its glory and power coiled up, just like a sleeping, slumbering serpent. The Yogic *Sādhana* that has been put forward is the Art of *Kundalinī Yoga*. It means a practical art, a way of reversing the outward directed process of evolution, so that all dualism and duality may completely be transcended and the whole ‘*Prapañca*’ or Universe is dissolved into a fundamental unitary consciousness and perfect bliss. Indian Yoga, in any form, is an attempt to realize the essential identity between ‘*Ahaṃ*’ and ‘*Idaṃ*’, the knower and the known, the

enjoyer and the enjoyed, the action and the reaction lending to the realisation of the identification of Jiva with Śiva. The outgoing process to which ordinary human beings are subject consists of differentiation of 'Integral experience', or 'All-consciousness' appearing as individualised empirical consciousness. So in empirical consciousness everything is rejected, projected outward into separateness, exclusiveness or even opposition. The reverse or return current consists in turning the course of outward going current inward leading to self-conscious, self-luminous Integral Experience and bliss. For example, human beings polarised into 'male' and 'female' in the outgoing evolutionary process appears as dual but identified and unified is Śiva-Śakti. Physical Union of Man and Woman can be sublimated into creative union of Śiva-Śakti. Such sublimation of the carnal appetite and transitory happiness has to be effected by certain esoteric practices and 'Kundalinī Yoga' till the supreme Integral Experience or Śiva-Śakti Experience with its perfect Ānanda or Bliss is attained. The Tantra declares 'Nivritti mārga' or the path of emancipation from bondage to the flesh reconciled with 'Pravrittimārga or the path of enjoyment. Pravritti or natural appetite, instinctive dispositions and cravings break up outward and lead to all sorts of differentiation, distinction, separation and dualism. The "Nivritti-Mārga" or the path of renunciation consists in reversing the direction of pravrittimārga by sādhana, performance of esoteric practices in conformity with the revealed truths or Śruti and suddhi or purification. In a previous chapter, it has been pointed out that in the course of the evolution of thirty six fundamental cosmic principles, a certain stage arises when the impure or Aśuddha Tattvas emerge and

the Śiva or All-consciousness becomes individualised in the partial consciousness or empirical consciousness of the jiva or the individual. This constitutes the stage of Prakṛiti in which 'Śiva' in Jiva shrinks into self-obliviousness from which he is to awaken. He is caught in the net of Sangsāra, the whirlpool of suffering. All his intrinsic powers are coiled up, as it were, which is called 'Kundalinī' in Tantrik terminology. Unless the coiled up power is activated into uncoiling itself, he can not rediscover his true nature, the truth of his being, the Śiva in him. All human aspirations by nature and necessity are directed towards uncoiling the fetters of bondage, of limitation, of mortality, of suffering. The non-dualistic Tantrik school preaches Sādhana and Siddhi. Cīṭ or All-consciousness has two aspects, its evolution into the Universe of names and forms and its involution or return to its seed-form, 'Bijāvasthā', the saṭ-svarupa. From the standpoint of evolution, it is becoming, from the standpoint of involution, it is Being-Cit-Bliss. It is evident that emancipation from bondage to suffering consists in a total transformation, dynamisation, sublimation of the physical, vital and psychical apparatus and this can be effective only with the help of certain esoteric practices as well as Yoga. Hence these practices are to be done with a clear and intelligent understanding of their true implications. This Sādhana Śāstra has prescribed 'Nāyasa', Bhutasuddhi, Prānāyama, Dhyāna, Prānapratisthā, Bāhya Puja and Japa and Mānas Puja and Japa. These are all calculated to effect a transformation, elevation of the devotee as well as the object of worship, the Devotee as well as his God or Goddess. It means a transformation of the means and the end of worship, the act of worship

and the object of worship into *Ciṭ* or 'Cinmoyee' which constitutes their essence. All these practices lead to the realisation of the essential identification in Integral Experience of the principle of *Ahaṃ* and *Idaṃ* 'I' and 'this' but this is not all. All these practices are indispensable stepping stones to the awakening of the *Kundalinī*. The self is there but it is to be discovered.

The lever of the locker, however, consists in *Brahmacarya* which is the *Conditio Sine Quibus non* of realising *Brahmapada* of self-realisation. According to *Āgama Siddhānta*, Macrocosmic consciousness in eternal inalienable relation with Power represents the nature of ultimate Reality. This supreme realisation has found expression in symbolic forms of worship such 'Purusa-Prakriti, Śiva-Śakti, Mahā-Vishnu-Maha-Lakshmi, Rama-Sita' in the conception of 'Ardha-Nariswara' worshipped in almost every heart and home of *Bhāratvarsa*. *Sādhana* (spiritual activities) is for human beings and is to be performed in and through the human body and not in a vacuum. Every man and woman, is the objective, concrete manifestation of Śiva-Śakti; for the *Jiva* or the individual is, in his essence, Śiva-Śakti, Macrocosmic consciousness in inseparable union with macrocosmic power. Considered from the standpoint of dualism, man and woman remain separated but from the standpoint of their inter-relation they are just like two hemispheres of the Universe in inseparable union, the same self in twin forms, male/female. The 'Integral Experience' is to be realised in and through male/female inter-relation in Macrocosmic or All-consciousness which is neither male nor female. We must be utterly human in order to be humanly divine in

the nursery of domestic life, Gārhasṭha-Āśram, the vale of soul-making, the sanctuary of redemptive remoulding of life divine. The cycle of birth and death which is Sangsāra may thus be transfigured. The quintessence of Tantra Sādhana lies in the heroic declaration that Gārhasṭha Āśram or married life connotes promotion in the hierarchy of the spiritual evolution of humanity.

In almost all kinds of Bhāratiya Dharma Sādhana, the practice of Brahmacharya has been extolled as an indispensable condition of realising the Summum Bonum of life. This is 'Kundalinī' Yoga which is 'Raja Yoga' per excellence, the royal path to for self-realisation. The Kundalinī-Śakti can be awakened from her dormant coiled state if and when the spiritual aspirant becomes 'Urddha-Retā'. To be and not merely to know is the aim of true Religion. Adhyātma Sādhana or spiritualism consists in total transformation of the physical, the biological and the psychical into the spiritual. According to the scientific 'Law of the Conservation of Energy', the total amount of Energy remains constant, there is transformation of energy from one state to another e.g., the physical into the vital the vital into the psychical so in the Śiva-Śakti State cosmic power remains constant, there is not yet any stress in shinning forth in manifestation. This is the highest end, the 'Summum Bonum' of Yoga to be realised. But the end is to be attained in an through the physical-biological-psychical apparatus called the human organism. 'The transformation of physical energy into procreative energy, procreative energy into vital energy and vital energy into the psychical energy leads to the emergence of higher and higher illumined states of

consciousness till 'All-consciousness' is reached. This has been pictorially described as the awakening of the magnificent 'Kundaliní'. 'Kundaliní' may be compared to the nucleus of an Atom, root-support of latent powers, the inexhaustible fountain and source of Energy, the centripetal point from which Jiva awakens to discover himself as 'Śiva or Bramha'. This means liberation from bondage to suffering, the realm of Sangsāra, the region of the cycle of birth and death. But liberation is a fact as well as an act, a possession as well as an achievement. To be 'Urddha-retā' which means reversing, introverting the outward and downward flow of vital energy in its gross form called semen, the psychical sex-urge, and forcing its course onward and upward is not only arduous but also one of the most difficult practices involved in the awakening of the Kundaliní. There must be a preparation for the spiritual pilgrim. Control of the senses, the fluctuating states and processes of the mind and the mind itself by means of Prānāyama, the art of controlling the exhalatory and inhalatory processes, Bhuta-Suddhi, purification of the gross and the subtle body by Mantra Yoga, worship etc. are necessary stepping stones to Kundaliní Yoga. Now, the act of reversing the outward and downward flow of vital-energy, presupposes the emergence of semen by sexual intercourse in Sanskrit Called 'Maithuna'. Milk is not curd but in order to obtain curd, a certain kind of churning process is necessary. Similarly, for the emergence of 'Bindu' or semen, the whole bio-physical organism must be churned by sexual intercourse and this presupposes male-female cohabitation sanctioned by our holy scriptures and sanctified by marriage, a religious sacrament for the highest spiritual realisation. On account of excessive heat

generated by the churning of the whole bio-physical organism, the vital energy moves onward through the median nerve, called 'Susumnā' by means of an esoteric yogic practice to be known from the spiritual preceptor or Guru-deva. Just as mercury in a thermometer or barometer expands or rises up, so in the course of its onward, upward flow it is transformed from its gross state to a subtle viz. psychical state and ultimately the psyche explodes into consciousness till it reaches its highest manifestation into the self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence, the beatific vision of Śiva-Śakti in eternal embrace. The illumined self is filled with bliss. Thus in Tantra Sādhana or spiritualism man and woman occupy very elevated position in the realisation of the super-conscious Life-Divine. Every man is considered to be Śiva in essence and every woman is objective manifestation of the almighty benevolent Mother of the Universe to the 'Aparakshaanubhuti' supersensuous beatific vision of the illumined Yogi. As such she is to be worshipped and venerated, as a goddess and never as an object of enjoyment. Every woman is an earthly embodiment of sixteen kalās or Divine grace. Hence she should be worshipped as the veritable bestower of wealth, power, vigour, energy, beauty, peace, happiness, longevity and regeneration. Every object, every being man or woman have their proper place, function, meaning and contribution to human regeneration or degeneration. It is in their right use or abuse, that make them good or evil. Man or woman cannot attain the Summum Bonum of life, the ens perfectimum in isolation, it is in their inter-relation that the self or Śiva can be recognized or rather rediscovered in the sanctuary of family life. Every woman is Māyā or

limiting power to which the individual Jiva is bound by infatuation which generates 'Moha' or self-obliviousness. She is also the bestower of Brahma-carya, yoga-māyā who works out his liberation from bondage to suffering by sacrificing all mundane values of life. She is both Māyā-Śakti that binds and Ciṭ-Śakti that liberates. Hence it has been very nicely that said 'Śavidyaparamānukterhetubhutā Sanātani Sangsārabandhahetusea Śaiva Sarvesareśvarī.

In this context, the place of women in Vedic and Tantric order of Society is an eye-opener to the suffering humanity. Even Ācarya Śankara was taken to task by Brahmānanda Giri on account of his disregard for a woman. The significance and value of sex-life in the cultural evolution of man cannot be denied. The creative spirit in the process of evolution is undoubtedly 'Kundalinī Śakti' which is closely linked up with sexual potency. This is evident from the fact that procreative energy can be located in close proximity to the sex organ. This sexual potency whether in man or woman when conserved is transformed into life energy, which in turn is transformed into psychical energy which ultimately opens up the door of 'self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence'. The Tantra declares that the course of procreative energy can be reversed which instead of flowing downward and outward can move onward just like a stream flowing towards the ocean of eternity. This can only be achieved in the sanctuary of domestic life governed by the religious institution called marriage, according to the injunctions of our religious scriptures. The bedrock of Tantra Sādhana consists in the aphorism, 'Svadāre Siddhimāpnuyāt'. In other words, Siddhi or liberation is to be attained in and

through male-female partnership sanctified by marriage. Marriage is the indispensable stepping stone to Brahmacharya. Its aim is to become Urdharetā. Urdharetā is one whose sexual potency is diverted, sublimated, introverted into the emergence of the highest illumination or self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence. Hence it has been further said 'Maranang Bindupātena Jivanam Bindu Dhāranāt, Yena Kena Prakārena Bindung Yogi Pradhārayeṭ'. In other words, death consists in the outflow of sex-energy, while life is conserved in its inward and onward flow to be transformed into the eternal vitality. The 'Yogi' or illumined self can only attain this state. It is a fact of history that there has been a devoted wife at the back of all creative personality. The ancient prophets, mystics and great Rishis like Vyasadeva, Vaśista, Jajñavalka attained the zenith of spiritual perfection on account of the utter self-sacrifice, devotion, Tapasyā of their female counterpart in the sanctuary of domestic life. Rishi Jajñavalka's wife, Maitrayee was greatly elevated by the practice of Brahmacharya and attained Brahmapada or the Summum Bonum of life. Gārghee was deeply versed in Brahma Vidyā and was elevated by the practice of Brahmacharya in cooperation with her husband. In the Pourānic age, the great liberated Lady Sulava taught Brahma-Vidyā and the art of liberation to Yanaka. Atreyee, Lopamudra, the wife of Agasta taught this secret of self realization to many disciples. In the Kali Yuga we come across Bishnupriya Devi, wife of Sri Chaitanya elevated to the highest level of super-consciousness by virtue of her selfless devotion to her husband's emancipation. The role of Sārādā Devi in the redemptive remaking of Sri Ramkrishna's personality can never

be denied. Her power of self-control, her one-pointed selfless devotion for the elevation of her husband to the rank of a Divine Incarnation-all stand as glaring testimony to the beneficial effect of Brahmacharya for human regeneration. In Ramkrishna's own word, "If she had not been so pure, if she had lost her self-control and made any demand on me, perhaps my own control would have given way, perhaps I should have become sex-conscious". According to Swami Sāradānanda, "Ramkrishna regarded Sāradā's coming to Dakṣhīnēswara as a test of purity. During the eighteen months that now followed, Ramkrishna and Sāradā lived in the closest intimacy. Often they slept together in the same bed. When Sāradā spoke of the period later in her life, she would describe it as one of continuous ecstasy, a state of married bliss which was nevertheless, absolutely sexless. Such a relationship is so unthinkable to most of us that we can do nothing but take it on trust". (Extract taken from Christopher Isherhrood's *Ramkrishna and his disciples* p. 145). What we are witnessing today is the utter scarcity of morally and spiritually elevated women who can sacrifice their all, all mundane values of life for the moral and spiritual regeneration of their male partners. The moral and spiritual awakening of Bhāratiya women is an indispensable condition, and crying need of present day society. All the above great examples of Indian womanhood are pointers to the fact that unless the passionate cravings of the flesh are controlled, directed towards the evolution of higher consciousness in man, there can be no release of benevolent forces for the establishment of peace, good will and harmony in society. Tantra Śāstra which is non-sectarian has a practical and practicable art, programme

of Brahmacharaya to be achieved here and now inside the sacred temples of family life, our domestic life, our hearth and home. 'Gārhasṭhya Āshrama' does not mean demotion but promotion to a higher state of life, the emergence to higher consciousness to be achieved not like a beggar, nor like a mendicant but like a hero with aching hands and bleeding feet.

CHAPTER—XII

The Doctrine Of Karma And Janmantara Or The Cycle of Birth and Rebirth

The doctrine of Karma, in oriental philosophy, can not be considered without reference to 'Jaṇmāntara' or the cycle of birth and rebirth. Man may be an extreme Hedonist or materialist but he can never get rid of the stubborn and cruel fact that death is certain, universal and inevitable and that he is afraid of death. But man can not live in absolute fear and that is why he wants to get rid of this fear not by ignoring the fact bluntly but by looking beyond the realm of death. It is impossible for an exclusively mortal being to be conscious of his mortality while remaining confined within it. Hence there arises the perennial question, "In what state does the dead man remain after leaving the mortal frame, or is death the 'be all and end all' of everything ? If we take the view that man is just an accidental by-product of mechanical forces and blind atoms and molecules only, confined within the prison-house of carnal desires and hankering after physical satisfaction, born here only to eat, drink and be merry, that man has by an accident stumbled into an alien universe, an unwelcome guest here to suffer and enjoy and that with the cessation of body everything ceases namely the physical body, the vital element and the psyche along with consciousness, we will be forced to the absolute

denial of the moral, rational and spiritual nature of man and degrade him to the status of a brute. Man's intellectual life inspires him with the belief that the present existence is only an 'are' where-through glimpses the untravelled world of immortality. His moral sense indicates the ideal of 'Common Good' which has made man self-conscious and which has made civilisation and culture possible. His spiritual consciousness leads him to the belief in an ever-living, self-conscious, selfluminous spiritual principle which is the self within him. At present, the human race has come to the juncture when it must decide whether to remain content with self-Centredness, selfish aggrandisement with the subjugation of the material world and material values by fighting against one another or to strive after the conquest of the spiritual world and spiritual values by controlling selfishness and by acknowledging that man as an isolated individual is no more than an animal. Thousands of years ago, it was in the solitude of the hermitages far from the fiery anguish of worries and anxieties of civilized life, the Indian seers of old observing the cruel fact of the sufferings of life and death tried to discover the key which would unlock the mystery of death. Their persistent spiritual effort in this direction by means of 'Tapas' and 'Yoga', meditation and worship was at last crowned with success and their spiritual experience has been enshrined in the ancient Indian scriptures like the Upanisadas and the Tantras for the enlightenment of the future generations of mankind. In the Bṛihaḍāraṇyaka Upanisada we find Arthabhāga, son of Sage Jaratkara saying 'Oh' Jaiṇavalka ! "when the power of speech merges in its essence Agni or fire, his vital air in Vāyu, his power of vision in the Sun, his mind in the Ākāśa or the etherial

region, his body in the earth and so on, in what state does the dead man remain then ?” The sage replied that after death man would remain in his Karmavija or ‘Psychic-complex’ which determines his present existence, the ‘psychic-complex’ or empirical individual in subtle body ‘Linga-Śarīra’. Our present being is born out of the past and may lead either to retrogression or regeneration. The Katha-Upanisad raises the pointed question, “There is the doubt in respect of a man when he is dead ; some say that he exists, other say that he does not ; ordinary mortals are aware only of the material world, material values but they in their ignorance and bondage do not know that beyond the veil of Neiscience, there lies the realm of immortality, that beyond death there is the occult world of spirits, that death is like a swoon, a passage from one room to another, that the Jiva or individual self in a subtle form carries with him his ‘karma-vija’ or psychic heredity which determines his future destiny or rebirth. Karma in Indian parlance, means psychic heredity, merits and demerits of our actions performed freely on account of our intrinsic free nature in a series of births and rebirths including the present one. It implies rebirth and continued existence of the individual self or Jiva in subtle form after death. The Geeta aptly says “Just as we put on new clothes discarding the old and torn ones, similarly, the individual Jiva in subtle body has to enter another body suitable to its psychic heredity”. Present scientific researches in the realm of the unconscious in man has established the fact that psychic heredity does exist, there are undoubted inheritance of psychic characteristics, instinctual behaviours, specific dispositions, unfulfilled desires in the form

of repression, special direction of consciousness to specific situations, adaptation to environment, autonomous self-assertiveness of the living individuals, predisposition to diseases, etc. Physically they may be called the nuclear or genetic constituents of the subtle body charged with consciousness, for consciousness never ceases. There are clear manifestations of life which explain themselves psychically, just as there are inherited characteristics which explain themselves physiologically. There is in every man individualised psychic nature which certainly indicates psychic heredity in the form of Karma or merits and demerits of actions performed in previous births and rebirths which necessarily give a certain form and direction to the individual's experiences of life. Indian spiritualism holds that the individual self or Jivātma has a psychic apparatus, whose constituents are mind, the intellect or buddhi and ego-sense together with the five subtle essences or Panca tanmātrā of earth, water, ether, air and fire. Collectively they form a group of eight which is known as 'Puryāstaka'. This is the Sukhmasarira or the subtle individual in the individualized psychic-complex charged with consciousness. This subtle body or 'Puryāstaka' leaves the body at the time of death and takes different forms, enter into different bodies till the psychic-complex is completely destroyed. In other words, the linga-sarira will have to suffer in a series of births and deaths till all desires, all repressions are completely exhausted by the cessation of all conscious and unconscious desires. At this stage the self awakens, as it were, from the deep caverns of slumbering memory to the day-light of self-consciousness. This is due to the fact that man's true nature which is Śiva or pure consciousness, 'Citi' in him is the indwelling, informing

spiritual principle which never for-sakes him and which never ceases till his ultimate emancipation from bondage to suffering. This implies that the individual self is not inert dead passivity but a dynamic spiritual principle realizing itself in and through the joys and sufferings of life in the form of the subtle body charged with psychic heredity. To know the self is to know its enjoyment, pangs of suffering, its pleasures and joys, its struggle for self-realisation. Man has to travel a long way through joys and sufferings, through trials and tribulations in order to attain the kingdom of Heaven. Though in his truth man is Śiva, Divine, Immortal and free, he becomes an 'Anu' or a limited individual or psychic-complex on account of 'Karma' or the limiting power of Karma performed freely in previous births and rebirths. Hence the individual self due to inherited psychic-characteristics on account of Karma is enveloped in self-obliviousness, considers himself to be Jiva or isolated individual with his omniscience, omnipotence and unlimited freedom determined being enveloped in the darkness of ignorance, oblivious of the universal stream of Consciousness. Such individual, on account of ignorance is unable to realize that beyond death there is immortality, beyond bondage there is eternal freedom, that humanity is utterly Divine. It is to be noted here that the whole cycle of birth and rebirth in relation to human beings involves retrogressions as well as regeneration, 'Devayāna' or the way of the Gods as well as 'pretayāna' the way of evil spirits. The Geeta pointedly affirms 'Yang Yang Bhābam Sṃaran Bhābam tayataynte Kalevaram, taṃ Tamevaiti Kaunteya Sadā Taṅ Bhāva Bhābita'. In other words, those individual selves or Jivas who by free exertion of intrinsic

will-power devote their activities towards self-realization are able to give correct direction to consciousness and thereby attain liberation ; while those individuals who by the exercise of their free will direct their activities, their life, tossing from desire to desire, from birth to birth and give a wrong direction to consciousness for the satisfaction of mundane values even at the time of death, are born again and again till their psychic repressions in the form of 'Vāsanās' are exhausted through sufferings, worries and anxieties. With the cessation of desires and sufferings they become elevated, regenerated. The doctrine of Karma thus implies freedom of will, freedom of action, freedom of thought, freedom of expression through thoughts, emotions, sentiments and volitions. We are the architects of our own destiny, some with massive deeds and great, some with ornaments of rhyme. Autonomus self-assertiveness, self-expression is the essence of our volitional life. Therefore man becomes elevated when his conscious life is directed towards self-realisation. The present destiny is born out of the past and may lead either to a good or bad future. There should be clear awareness of the necessity, universality and inevitability of death and therefore we are not to cling to life on earth as our permanent residence with its ceaseless wanderings and sufferings in the cycle of birth and death i.e., Sangsāra. Rather we should strive to know ourselves and pray for our liberation invoking the help of the Divine Mother for a safe passage through the agonising fearful state following the dissolution of the body.

Human Life, on this planet called earth, consists of a series of consciousness. The first known state is the

birth-consciousness, and the last known state at the moment of death is death-consciousness. This implies that there is no breach, no gap in the fluidity of consciousness from one state to another. Living and dying is an art. There is a Bengalee adage, 'Of what use are Japa and Tapas, or meditation and worship, if one knoweth not how to die' ? Those who are spiritually regenerated, their consciousness is directed to the self, the divine, immortal, spiritual principle in man. They also get a kind of religious therapeutic at the last moment, by his friends and relatives offering prayers to the Almighty, all-benevolent Mother and good wishes for the heavenward ascent of the departed directing the consciousness of the psychic-complex or Linga Śarīra towards an ever-living God who will never forshake him. Among almost all nations of the world, some kind of religious practices in the form of prayer, worship, fire-worship, the reading of sacred scriptures like the Gita, the Bible, the Koran etc. are prevalent. All these ceremonies and practices remind us that we can help the dying man by prayer and meditation, by the performance of funeral ceremonies, Śrādh ceremony wherein we offer those food stuff and those things to the departed psychic-complex or subtle body who had inclination for those kind in order that their unfulfilled desires for these thing would be satiated. Our sacred scriptures are thus the Pilgrim's guide to the other world. All these go to prove that this present existence as well as the Universe is not the first and last. It is but one of the infinite series of births and deaths without absolute beginning or end though there is change from one state to another. These series of successive conscious existences have to be passed through, until purity, devotion, spiritual

illumination produces that high spiritual power of detachment which is the cause of emancipation from the cycle of birth and death namely Sangsāra. Freedom, Divinity and Immortality forming the Trinity is the attainment of the supreme state called self-conscious, self-luminous, Intelligence or self-realisation, 'Swarupa-Pratisthā', Swarupa-Jñānam or Self-Knowledge, 'Pratyavijñā' or Self-recognition, when the self rests upon itself in absolute blissful state. But this state is not a state of segregation. The All-consciousness is not a detached individualised consciousness. It is an at-one-ment i.e., the individualised self or psychic-complex is completely dissolved and becomes one with the universal and realises the same self here, there and everywhere, his omnipresence his omnipotence and freedom i.e., he realises the same Śiva in all or the same self in all. This is liberation. This is not a state of losing personal identity but expansion and interpenetration of personality in all and thus becoming one with all in equality, peace, harmony, goodness and service. We lose our personality bifurcated from all, we gain our personality by living through all in compassion ; for greater the illumination, the greater is the self-expansion in compassion, in sympathy, in co-operation with all. Personality is not a finished and finite something, it is not a product or effect of anything but it is a possession as well as an achievement, a progressive self-realization from birth to birth, until we realise the 'Purusottama' the highest Divine Personality in the human working in and through the human. The Hindu belief is that the evolution of man is the effect of a long continuous evolutionary process from the simplest biological protoplasmic cell down to self-conscious, self-luminous

Intelligence which is the self. There is a Hindu saying men have to pass through eighty four million kinds of wombs in order to attain his present destiny with immense potential powers of Divinity, Immortality and Freedom. So the Śrīmat Bhāgabat Says : 'Labdhā Sudurlavaṃ idaṃ bahusambhavāṇṭe'.

In other words, human existence is not only rare but utterly rare. There is no such rarity in creation as man. Man has discovered truth, not any God, Man has discovered beauty not any beautiful Deity, Man has worked out his true destiny by an inward search in the depth of his consciousness without any outside help ; for Divinity, freedom and Immortality constitute his true nature which is the self. God is not God, because He is outside the Universe, God is God because He is the indwelling, informing Principle in all. God is loved not because He is an outsider who loves His fellow beings from outside ; God is loved because His love permeates all, His love is in the Sun, in the Moon, in Air, in Water, inside the soil of the earth and everywhere by which He sustains, maintains, preserves the whole order of existence, His love shines in and through the mother's love for her children, wife's devotion to her husband, Saint's devotion to the Divine. His glory has been manifested in the form of Divine revelation to saints and prophets, to seers of old in their intellect and intuition, in their supersensuous perception who have left their spiritual legacies in the sacred scriptures for future descendants of mankind. Hence the Vedic lore proclaims to the world without any distinction of caste, creed, sex or nationality "Srinyantū Sarve Amritasya Putrā". These revealed

truths enshrined in the sacred scriptures, holy books are just like traveller's guide to the occult world of spirits and ultimately to the kingdom of Heaven.

Death is not an absolute ending, everybody whether he may be a Hindu, or Christian or Muslim believes that it means only the separation of the psychic-complex 'Linga Śarira, or subtle body from the gross physical body. The necessity and inevitability of some body whether it be subtle body, astral body or any other body always remains till the complete cessation of the 'Linga Śarira', when all sufferings cease and the Jiva or individual self attains 'Videha Mukti' or bodiless liberation. According to Tantra there is the power of the subtle body to transmigrate into another body just as when by the attraction or gravitational pull, there is ebb-tide and flow-tide in the river, similarly by the gravitational pull inherent in the psychic-complex there arises sexual inspiration in somebody suited to the realization of unfulfilled desires, repressions, in the form of 'Vāsanā' and as a consequence there is a new birth of the 'Linga-Śarira' or psychic-complex. Thus the subtle body is individualised and there arises in him an ego-sense and he feels himself as an individual among many individuals. This is, 'Birth of the new man out of the ashes of the old.' Thus he is born again and again to this world forgetting his oneness with all, completely oblivious of the truth that his individualised consciousness is in the All-consciousness and thus he is one with Śiva or the Universal. An individual can not live in utter isolation. He realizes due to an inner urge from within which arises out of his rational, moral and spiritual nature, in isolation he suffers ; in unification,

inter-relationship with all, he realises the highest end, the meaning, the significance of existence. Thus the cycle of birth and death is a pointer to liberation from bondage to sufferings. This cycle which is known as Sang-sāra is the stepping stone to progressive self-realization. This is evident, from the fact that to the unborn, there is neither sufferings nor any problem of overcoming sufferings. Similarly in the state of Immortality, there is no mortality, no limitation and consequently no sufferings. Finite mortal human beings who are in their true nature eternally free, divine and immortal on account of free will which is the divine element in him, act freely enjoy and suffer according to the merits and demerits of their actions. This Saṃsāra or 'Karmakshetra' or field of action is therefore to be regarded either from the view-point of the blind man who does not see the inter-relation of things and is therefore lost in a big world which he cannot understand or from the standpoint of the wise man, the illumined soul who sees everything including himself in their inter-relationship i.e., in All-consciousness. This, Saṃsāra, therefore may be turned into a battle field of individuals fighting one another for transitory mundane values or a 'Dharma Kshetra', 'vale of soul-making' where man can live virtuous life in compassion, in peace, in harmony with all. Thus our earthly existence may either be transformed into a hell or Heaven by our own free will, free action. Hence human responsibility is very great. The doctrine of Karma with reference to 'Janmāntara' is not a fatalistic doctrine. It would be a dangerous act of self-delusion, if one tried to get rid of the unpleasant moral and spiritual responsibility by indulging in the blind faith that human volition

is pre-determined, governed by the mechanical law of causation, or is the inevitable result of fate or 'Karma-phala' or result of our actions mechanically performed. The human being who looks upon his own destiny as already determined by 'fate', 'Karma-phala' or by pre-established mechanical or natural laws only exhibits a lack of will-power to survive, to realise the Summum Bonum of life. It would be an unwarrantable degradation of human being including even the mentally and normally highest specimen of human race to be considered as inanimate automata in the hand of mechanical or natural causation blindly called 'Fate'. Thus the doctrine of Karma implies the affirmation of the spirit. The spiritual world is a higher world, there we are promoted on account of our meritorious deeds, while demerits lead to degradation. Hence according to Katha Upanisada, knowledge of 'what becomes of a man after death' is an inevitable, universal necessary problem which is to be solved by 'Yoga' and 'Tapa', as it can teach how this present existence on earth can be moulded for the life hereafter. The Tantras and the Upanisadas are regarded as the most elevating and most illuminating sacred scriptures because of the fact that herein we find solution of the three fundamental problems of human life namely the problem of the self, the doctrine of Karma and rebirth and the future destiny of man.

It has already been pointed out that birth and death are just like day and night due to earth's diurnal rotation round the earth. They are just the two poles of one and the same destiny of man. It now remains for us to explain clearly what is the after-death state. It is to be

specially remembered here, that there is no breach in the series of conscious states and processes which are brought forward from the past to the present. The process is not interrupted by death, change continues in the elements of the psycho-physical organism called 'Puryā-staka'. The after-death change of transformation is merely the effect of the actions of accumulated past 'Karma' and does not as in earthly life, create new Karma for which a physical body is necessary. There is no breach of consciousness but a continuity of transformation. The death-consciousness is the stepping stone to further states of consciousness. Karma which is done out of free will generates a fully formed 'Linga Śarīra' with psychic heredity taking up its abode in a suitable 'matrix' whence it is born again accompanied by birth-consciousness. What is born can not be altogether different from what has gone out ; because it is the present inheritance of the past and has no independent separate existence of its own. This means continuity of consciousness in the subtle body or 'Linga-Śarīra' born of psychic-heredity. If the present psychic-complex or birth-consciousness be completely new, there is no question of enjoying the fruits of our past actions performed in our previous births and deaths, there is no problem of Janmāntara or Life-after-Death, no problem of liberation from bondage to suffering. There are scholars and thinkers who hold the view that the dying-consciousness cannot be continued into the birth-consciousness of the new born baby; for such continuation presupposes physical circumstances and conditions that may be realised at the moment of the being to be reborn. They say that this difficulty is solved by assuming an intermediate existence which

lasts for several days. In this intermediate existence 'the Linga Śarira' or the subtle body creates an embryo out of his thought-force into which he enters as soon as it can find opportunity. Scientifically and philosophically there can not be any hold up of psychic-complex according to the doctrine of Karma. Such process does not consist of independent separate sections waiting upon one another. This is the fundamental basis of Karma Doctrine. According to Tantra Śāstra which holds that creation is an eternal process, so it is important to know in this connection what is meant by the after-death state. Immediately after the separation from the physical body, the 'Linga Śarira' or Psychic-complex endowed with heredity fall into a swoon or trance-state, but it cannot linger in that state for long. Just as we cannot live in perpetual sleep and just as we wake up from sleep and the transition between sleep and awakening is continuous ; similarly the subject wakes up out of the swoon and visualizes in symbolic visions, one by one, the phantoms created by his own Karma on earth, what he thought and what he had done become objectified, as it were, still more or less under the delusion that although he is dead, he is still attached to a body. Gradually he realizes that actually he has no such earthly body but only a subtle body made up of subtle elements, namely mind, intellect, ego-sense, psychic heredity and five subtle essences making up his psychic-complex. Gradually he begins to develop an over-powering desire to possess one on account of Karmic predilection for Samsāric existence, i.e., there is an over-whelming desire for seeking birth into a new body and eventually with his re-birth in this or in some other region like the

‘Bhurloka’, ‘Bhubarloka’, ‘Svarloka’, ‘Maha-loka’, ‘Jana-Loka’, ‘Tapa-loka’ and ultimately ‘Satyaloka’. This is reincarnation or rebirth which is either a loss of paradise due to suppressed desires or paradise regained by means of great Yogic illumination. All the above stages of the dying man has been vividly described in the ‘Vrihadāranyaka’. “As a man’s desire is, so is his destiny. For as his desire is, so is his will, and as his will is, so is his deed, and as his deed is, so is his reward, whether good or evil. A man acts according to his desires to which he clingeth. After death he goeth to the next world in the form of individualised ‘Linga Śarira’ along with the merits and demerits of his actions and after reaping the harvest of his deeds, he returns again to the world of action. Thus he who has desire continueth, subject to birth”. The Katha-Upanisada says, “He who lacketh discrimination, whose mind is unsteady and whose heart is impure, never reacheth the goal but is born again and again, but he who has discrimination, whose mind is steady and whose heart is pure, reacheth the goal and having reached it, he attains freedom from rebirth.” Look carefully at the dying man. He is leaving friends and relatives, he exhibits signs of desires unfulfilled, consequently he has a strong impulse to recover the the last opportunity again on this plane. In all these longings and impulses, ‘Karma’ is all-masterful and he goes down-ward or upward according to the merits and demerits of his actions. If he has gained spiritual illumination on the earthly plane, he at once is free, realises the all-good Śivam, the truth of all existence, as the Śiva, the universal Father shines forth as the germ and potency of creation as seed or Viswavijam. His Vimarsa-Śakti or the great

Mother of Space is the universal womb Mahāyoni into which the seed falls as the world system. The problem of 'what happens after death' can thus be scientifically, rationally, philosophically justified. From birth to death and from death to birth, the thought-forms, the desire-forms arising out of past actions gradually exhaust themselves. The psychic-heredity born of habitual propensities being mental record comparable to the record of a cinema-film running to its end, the after death-state and the psychic-complex emerging once again from the womb of the almighty Mother, begins to experience joys and sufferings of mortal existence, until by progressive enlightenment in this or other sphere of existence, he realises his own Divinity, Immortality and Freedom.

We are thus led to the consideration of the import and meaning of Jaṇmāntara or the doctrine of rebirth for a full comprehension of doctrine of Karma. If the present existence which means birth-consciousness and death-consciousness is all that we have, if all our joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations are confined within the prison-house of this planet called Earth, if there is neither the past nor the future, if the present is merely present without having a past and is not continued in the future, it inevitably follows that we are not human beings but animals without any consciousness of the past and the future. But after all, as human beings, "we look before and after and pine for what is not". We are born with birth-consciousness, however dim it may be, we have death-consciousness, however indistinct, vague and indefinite, it may be. This proves the continuity of conscious existence of the psychic-complex or character-complex through

various stages of the evolutionary process. This is an indubitable fact which can not be ignored and which is the basis of our faith in 'Janmāntara' or Rebirth. Janmāntara or Rebirth can not be understood by those who are confined within the limitation of the present existence, the fact of rebirth can only be known by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. In the Yoga Darsan we come across an aphorism "Jādrísí bhābanāryasya Sidhirbhabatí tādriśí." In other words, if the mind be fixed on the acquirement of any object and knowledge of its true nature that object in its true nature will reveal itself to that mind. So in the state of concentrated consciousness which has no break, one can know and recall to his mind his temporary states of previous births and deaths, he can remember such was my parents, such was my residence, such was my family, such was my profession and such my term of life and such was my birth place. In that state of concentrated consciousness, or 'Samādhi' one can visualise heavenly-visions or his past as well as his future. There are persons who believe that though man is the zenith of evolutionary process, yet he can go down to the level of lower animals and take re-embodiment in sub-human creatures immediately after losing the human form due to demerits. An examination of the laws of Manu, the great sage, whose authority is accepted by Orthodox Hindus, in this connection is highly instructive and illuminating. "He, at the outset, sets forth the fundamental laws of action, which spring from the mind, from speech and from the body, produce either good or evil desires, by action are brought forth the various conditions of man, the highest, the middling and the lowest, and that man has to enjoy results of good or evil mental acts in his

mind, that of a verbal act in his speech and that of a bodily act in his body" (translation by Sir William Jones). Manu then expounds how man is not a simple but a complex being, "That substance which gives power or motion to the body, the wise call Kshetrajña or Jivātmā or the vital spirit. Another internal spirit called 'Mahaṭ' or the great psychic-complex attends the birth of all creatures embodied. The vital spirit plus the psychic-complex are closely united with five subtle essences or 'Pancatanmātrā' but intrinsically connected with the supreme spirit or Divine essence of consciousness which pervades all beings, high or low". It is evident from what Manu has said is that the vital spirit plus the psychic-complex make up the character-complex or Jivāṭma is not merely an animal but an animal endowed with a character which he has inherited from the past. This is the human character-complex with rational, moral and spiritual nature which never forshakes him but ever abides in him. On account of this Divine essence, man is moral which means freedom of will, free action, and by acting freely man attains merits or demerits of his actions or the fruits of his actions which he has to reap. The implication is that once in the hierarchy of the evolutionary process the 'human' is achieved, that which is specifically 'human' remains so forever in accordance with the law of nature, that "like attracts like" and produces like. Sāyana, the most illumined in Vedic lore in his commentary on the Atharva-veda (Chap. XI, S) explains that the boy mentioned is the same as the boy Naciketā of the Katha-Upanisada who went to the realm of yama i.e., the realm of Janmantara and his consequent return to the realm of men. That this region the Yamaloka as interpreted is the correct

teaching of rebirth doctrine is confirmed as conveying the highest Upanisadic teaching concerning death and rebirth. Thus the rebirth or Janmāntra doctrine is based upon Karma, a human principle of consciousness, embodied, along with a vital principle, will under the normal Karmic condition of gradual progression which governs the majority of mankind be continued to be born in human form with vital and psychic-dispositions with characteristics which are divinely human as well as with characteristics, humanly brutish. Thus we find among men, great sages, prophets, religious reformers, philosophers, poets and scientists. We also find among men the blood thirsty tiger-man, the industrious miserly man, the butter fly man, the fearless lion-man etc. Human life is far richer in possibilities for the working out of the intrinsic Divinity, Immortality and Freedom, no matter, how animal-like his Karma may be. As a child can not solve highly complicated mathematical problem, so the animal-man who is enveloped in ignorance and is imprisoned within the cravings of the flesh, of pleasure, joys and sorrows of life, who can not look beyond death, have to suffer the fruits of his animal-life, actions until and unless his character-complex made up of the vital and psychic-heredity is purified on the anvil of sufferings in the cycle of birth and rebirth and by the inner working of the divine essence in him, and finally he attains liberation. Man is free to degrade himself or to liberate himself. Emancipation, liberation is an achievement and can not be a gift. This rebirth, or reincarnation in human form has brought Ram-Krishna, Sri Chaitanya, Buddha, Great prophets and Yogis who have not only illumined themselves but also have attained Immortality in self-expansion, in illuminating

others, just like a lamp lighting up many lamps. Rebirth may also be lower rebirth almost brutish in many cases, because they imbibe many common characters with the brutes by their thoughts and deeds like hatred, pride, cruelty etc., differing however, from animals by virtue of their thought life, emotional life, volitional life i.e., the Divine element of self-conscious, self-luminous Intelligence in the human which remain latent in them. But because latent, it must become potent, which will take a long period of psychic time revolving round many births and deaths. This is the Indian view of Janmāntara or rebirth. Dr. E. B. Tylor, a great anthropologist corroborates the above Hindu view of life. He says "So it may seem that the original idea of transmigration was the straight-forward and reasonable one of human soul being reborn in new human body". "Everyday's experience familiarises us with the facts which are grouped under the name of heredity. Every one of us bear upon him obvious marks of his remotal relationship, more particularly the sum of tendencies to act in a certain way which we call 'character', is often to be traced through a long series of progenitors and collaterals". So we may justly say that this character—this moral and intellectual essence of man—this Variable passed over from one fleshy tabernacle to another and thus really migrates from generation to generation. In a new-born infant, the character of the stock lies latent and the ego is little more than a bundle of potentialities. But very early, this becomes actuality, from childhood to age, they manifest themselves in dullness or brightness, weakness or strength, viciousness or uprightness and with each feature modified by confluence with another character, if by nothing else, the character passes on to its incarnation in a new body.

Om Tat Sat

CORRIGENDUM

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
4	7	1200 and 200 B. C	2000 and 1200 B. C
8	5	inseperable	inseparable
10	last line.	is	are
13	10	my	may
14	24	regularly	regularly
26	4	geographied	geographical
34	6	insight	insight
53	9	Jñaloka	Jñānaloka
65	4	or	of
66	8	in	to
78	2	sence	sense
81	5	may	may be
81	15	work	word
82	17	katasthe	na tasthe
83	15	develop	developed
84	9	their's	their
87	21	shining	shinning
87	29	form	from
88	5 & 6	faminine	feminine
88	31	to	two
94	12	regeneration	degeneration
97	12	a kind	kind
108	9	my	may
111	28	all so	also
116	25	shining	shinning
118	6	contradiciting	contradicting
121	2	objetively	objectively
122	last line	Nisusi	Nisus
151	21	eviden	evident

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
155	4	differtiation	differentiation
167	12	faulties	faculties
169	1	ordliness	lordliness
176	2	involution	involution
177	29	Parakāśa	Prakāśa
178	19	indifferentiated	undifferntiated
180	11	comes	comes into
182	24	indescrivable	indescribable
187	11	realised	realise
187	21	there	their
188	9	Dvam	Ovam
188	10	charming	churning
188	20	after	afar
189	3	is	Delete
189	9	above	abode
192	6	sheathe	sheath
192	11	transcendentalblissfu	transcendentalblissful
196	14	Hana-sa-yoga	Haṃsa yoga
198	25	obligious	oblivious
198	26	have	has
208	8	listening	listening with
208	13	truth	truths
209	1	lending	leading
211	16	heart	hearth
212	12	for	Delete
214	1	charning	churning
220	4	'are'	'arc'
225	25	thing	things
231	6	of	or

